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**Spirit, Penance, and Perfection:
The Exegesis of I Corinthians 5:3-5 from A.D. 200-451**

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Thesis Abstract

Spirit, Penance, and Perfection: the Exegesis of I Corinthians 5:3-5 by Writers from 200 to 451.

This thesis examines the exegesis of I Corinthians 5:3-5 between the years of 200, when the text is first cited, and 451, by which time the text had been subjected to a variety of exegetical approaches and applied to a number of different situations. A chronological (rather than topical) approach has been adopted; each writer's overall use of the passage is studied, in hope that this will give better insight into his exegesis of the Corinthian text.

Although penitential theology was beginning to develop, with one major penance allowed for grievous post-baptismal sin (an idea found in the *Shepherd* of Hermas), the earliest extant exegesis of I Corinthians 5:3-5 occurs in the works of Tertullian during his Montanist phase; he cites it to support his argument that certain grave sins are beyond remission by the Church. For Tertullian, the *interitum carnis* refers to irrevocable excommunication and possible death for a serious offender. The *spiritus* which is to be saved is that of the Church, since the offender's spirit cannot possibly be saved after a descent into serious sin. Later in the same century, Origen takes a different position; since Paul counseled the church at Corinth to forgive a penitent sinner (II Corinthians 2:5-11), this was presumably the same man who had so grievously sinned (I Corinthians 5). Therefore, all sins are remissible by the Church. Origen construes the πνεῦμα to be saved as the offender's spirit. The ὅλεθρον τῆς σαρκὸς refers to the destruction of the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς and may be identified with the sufferings and humiliations which penitents undergo. These approaches to the Corinthian passage are joined by a third in the following century: Basil, although he at times cites I Corinthians 5:3-5 in a congregational context, also transplants the passage into a monastic setting, deriving support from it for his method of chastising recalcitrant monks. Here σάρξ is construed as the individualistic, self-asserting human nature. This thesis will show that these three methods of interpreting the Corinthian text remain normative for the period under discussion, although by the end of the period under discussion, writers such as John Chrysostom, Pacian, and Jerome suggest that the punishment may involve more than mere excommunication, although it does include that. By the mid-fifth century, the exegesis of I Corinthians 5 is closely bound to the penitential procedure of the Church, and there is general agreement that the passage's overall character is remedial and restorative; σάρξ refers to the carnal nature which must be destroyed in order for a person to become spiritual again, and this is done through penance. The punishment imposed by Paul is seen to be temporary and restorative, not final and destructive.

Although the patristic consensus differs from most modern commentators in identifying the offenders of I Corinthians 5 and II Corinthians 2, nevertheless the exegesis of this passage by the Fathers retains its interest and value. Some of the more exceptional interpretations are now echoed in recent commentaries.

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To Margaret, with love and appreciation

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACW	<i>Ancient Christian Writers</i>
ANCL	<i>Ante-Nicene Christian Library</i>
CCG	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca</i>
CCL	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina</i>
CPG	<i>Clavis Patrum Graecorum</i>
CPL	<i>Clavis Patrum Latinorum</i>
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i>
EAASP	Campanhausen, Hans von: <i>Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power</i>
GSC	<i>Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller</i>
JThS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LNPF	<i>Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers</i>
PG	Migne: <i>Patrologiae Graeca</i>
PL	Migne: <i>Patrologiae Latina</i>
RSR	<i>Recherches de Science Religieuse</i>
TRE	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i>

INTRODUCTION

Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians has always been of great interest to me; it was the first book of the Bible I read after my entry into the Christian faith, and later I often made use of it during my seventeen years of pastoring churches. I always found it to be a book of enormous vitality, capturing well the problems facing a Gentile church of the first century. In 1982 I read Professor I. Howard Marshall's book, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*; a footnote concerning I Corinthians 11 and the difficulties in its interpretation caught my attention.¹ From this passage, my thoughts moved to another disciplinary passage in I Corinthians--chapter 5. As I continued to turn from pastoring toward a PhD program, this passage of Scripture remained in my thoughts, and when I applied to the University of Edinburgh, suggesting this as a possible topic for research, the Faculty of Divinity approved it.

The first extant use of the passage occurs in the works of Tertullian; J.N.D. Kelly has noted that, "... the rough outlines of a recognized penitential discipline were beginning to take shape" by the beginning of the third century;² the fact that the text is not cited until then (at least, in the works which have survived) supports Kelly's statement. Thus, A.D. 200 is the *terminus a quo*; the Council of Chalcedon marks the *terminus ad quem*. By this time, the basic lines of interpretation were laid out, as this thesis will demonstrate. The nature of the contents of the passage made it almost inevitable that it would be taken up by the developing penitential theology of the Church; indeed, it is rarely discussed without that context.³

¹Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*, endnote 14 on Chapter Five (pp. 172-3). The note reads: "Paul's belief in supernatural acts of judgment hangs together with his belief in supernatural acts of healing and other miraculous signs associated with salvation. Further, Paul could probably claim prophetic powers to discern that a specific event was an act of judgment; but it would be foolhardy for modern Christians to claim similar prophetic powers. None of the commentators I have consulted really discusses the problem caused by this gap between first-century and twentieth-century beliefs."

²Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 216.

³The sole exceptions in this thesis occur in *De Recta in Deum Fide* (or, *Dialogue of Adamantius*); cf. Appendix B, which follows Chapter 3 (the Cappadocians).

Several questions are raised immediately when this text comes under consideration; one of the first was whether the offender of I Corinthians 5:1-13 was the same individual as the man in II Corinthians 2:5-11, whom Paul counseled the Corinthians to forgive, lest he be overcome by excessive sorrow (II Cor. 2:7). One's thinking on this point would certainly contribute to an overall understanding as to whether forgiveness was possible even for serious sins, and as such, the question involves more than a point of biblical accuracy; the Church of the third century wrestled with the problem of forgiveness, as illustrated copiously by such writers as Tertullian, Cyprian, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen. As will be seen, the question of the identification of the offenders of I Corinthians 5 and II Corinthians 2 was already in existence by the time of Tertullian, who fiercely rejected such an identification in his Montanist writing *De pudicitia*. On the other hand, Origen made the identification, frequently citing II Cor. 2:5-11 to demonstrate that forgiveness was available for even heinous offences. His thinking carried the day; by far the great majority of writers to be examined in this thesis followed his thinking, even when they excoriated Origen as a heretic.

Although it does not cite the Corinthian passage, the *Shepherd* of Hermas was very important for the understanding of this text in relation to the developing penitential procedure of the Church. Hermas proclaims that there is a second repentance available for older Christians who have fallen into sin⁴. Tertullian's virulent rejection of this tenet in the opening pages of *De pudicitia*, in which he calls the book the "Shepherd of adulterers", is well known. However, the other writers studied in this thesis held to the idea that, for serious sins, even when there was forgiveness available, penance could be performed only once. Thus, in the first century under observation in my research, there are two different ways of understanding this text, both answering the question of whether forgiveness is

⁴Vis. 2,2,4f.; 3,5,5; Mand. 4, 3-5; Sim. 8,9.

available for serious sin (related to the identification of the offenders in I Cor. 5:1-13 and II Cor. 2:5-11). Tertullian answers with a violent negative response, Origen with a firm, positive one; their understanding of the Pauline language is clearly reflected in their writings.

The third line of approach to the Corinthian text first surfaces in the writings of Basil the Great⁵; here, the passage is placed against a monastic backdrop, and Paul's strong words to a congregation radically in need of discipline become instead words of advice for correcting a recalcitrant monk. Although this method of exegeting the text was not as much used as Origen's approach, it will be seen that the monastic application of I Cor. 5:3-5 continued to find a place to the end of the period under observation.

The points in the text to which these writers devote the most time and space are in relation to 1) the possibility of forgiveness for even serious sins; 2) the nature of the punishment to which Paul sentenced the offender; 3) the relationship between it and the penitential procedure of the Church of their times (particularly including excommunication); 4) the nature of the spirit which is to be saved⁶; 5) the time of this salvation; now, or only in the eschatological future? The method by which Paul pronounced judgment from afar is also discussed, although it is not of as much interest to the writers as the question of forgiveness following judgment. The question of whether the bishops are full heirs of the apostolic power mentioned in I Cor. 5:3-4 is almost never addressed directly⁷. The role of the congregation in the imposition of punishment is mentioned comparatively rarely; the apostolic sentence captures greater attention among these writers. The second, fourth, and fifth points

⁵Although it also appears in some of the *Pachomiana*; cf. chapter 4. Dating this material is not always easy.

⁶Often this is not stated expressly, but assumed; e.g., Origen always assumes that the spirit is the offender's spirit, although he does not defend this belief, since it seems evident to him.

⁷Cyril of Alexandria moves in this direction; he is the major exception.

are the ones which are of particular importance to this thesis, although the others will enter into the discussion.

In this thesis, I have used a chronological approach rather than a topical one; instead of taking the various concepts in the Corinthian passage and treating their exegesis by the writers from 200 to 451 in a summary fashion, I have begun with each writer individually, trying to gain an overall picture of his exegesis of the passage as well as of the historical background against which these documents were produced. In addition to I Cor. 5:3-5, I have also examined the authors' citations of other portions of that chapter which might have a bearing on their exegesis of it. I have also examined their references to II Cor. 2 (for the reasons mentioned above), Col. 2:5 (which uses the "absent in body, but present in spirit" language of I Cor. 5:3-4), and I Tim. 1:20 (in which Hymenaeus and Alexander are "handed over to Satan", like the offender in I Cor. 5:5). When possible, I have used the *Corpus Christianorum* and *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* editions for the Latin texts and *Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller* for the Greek; however, for many of the passages under examination, Migne's vast collection of patristic texts remains the basic source. There are also other smaller collections of the source material (cf. Bibliography) which have been immensely valuable. Johannes Quasten's *Patrology* has also been most helpful in finding some of the most important secondary literature. I have endeavoured to follow the recommendations of the *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, *Clavis Patrum Latinorum*, and the *Biblia Patristica* for the best editions. In Bible references, I have normally used the chapter and verse divisions of modern versions, for the sake of convenience⁸. Where this is not the case, I have indicated it. In indented citations, I have placed direct Scriptural quotations in bold type. When referring to Latin in the (non-indented) body of the text, I have placed it in italics;

⁸This is particularly important in citations from homilies and commentaries on Jeremiah; the LXX version of Jeremiah is very confused.

direct Scriptural citations there are also placed in bold type. The *Vetus Latina* used by most of the Latin writers shows no significant variants; the ὅλεθρον τῆς σαρκὸς becomes *interitum carnis*. The only differences among the Latin writers concern the preposition to use in I Cor. 5:13 (*Auferte malum ex vobis ipsis*); the writers vary between *ex* and *de*. The differences between Greek and Latin writers are to be sought in their ideas rather than in any textual variants, although there are times when the authors take note of the differences in the codices;⁹ there is basic unanimity concerning the text. However, it will be shown that this is not the case with the exegesis by these same writers.

⁹Particularly Augustine in his treatment of I Cor. 5:6a in *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani* III, 2, 5.

Chapter 1

TERTULLIAN

Tertullian is the only North African father prior to Augustine who uses I Cor. 5:3-5. He refers most frequently to the text in *De pudicitia*, a product of his Montanist period. However, several citations of the text occur in his slightly earlier work, *Adversus Marcionem*. I will treat these references first, due to their chronological priority; however, they also represent a much more moderate approach to the text than the later work.

In Book V, chapter 7 of *Adversus Marcionem*, Tertullian cites I Cor. 5:5 to attack Marcion's idea that Paul's God was a God of love, not of judgment. The very fact that Paul surrendered a man to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, says Tertullian, shows that Paul was "the herald of an avenging God".¹ He continues:

viderit et quomodo dixerit: **in interitum carnis, ut spiritus saluus sit in die domini**, dum et de carnis interitu et de salute spiritus iudicarit et '**aufferri**' iubens '**malum de medio**' creatoris frequentissimam sententiam commemorauerit. Expurgate uetus fermentum, ut sitis noua conspersio, sicut estis azymi. ergo azymi figurae erant nostrae apud creatorem. sic et **pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus**. quare pascha Christus, si non pascha figura Christi per similitudinem sanguinis salutaris pecoris et Christi? quid nobis et Christo imagines induit sollemnium creatoris, si non erant nostrae?²

R.P.C. Hanson has noted that:

...Tertullian's interpretation of Scripture, where he is not using any and every argument in order to indulge in special pleading, leaves a very favourable impression on the modern reader. Its characteristics are common

¹*Tertullian Against Marcion*, Ante-Nicene Library, p. 402.

²*CSEL* XLVII, p.593.

sense, realism, and restraint. This is particularly true of one of his longest works, the *Adversus Marcionem*.³

The passage cited above from this work illustrates the truth of Professor Hanson's observations. Tertullian's citations are from the whole of I Cor. 5 and show his concern to place a passage in its context. Barnes has shown that this work dates from Tertullian's Montanist period; he places it in 207/8, several years before *De pudicitia*.⁴ The reference to I Cor. 5:13 (*auferri...malum de medio*) possibly reveals a sentiment similar to the harsher later work; it is not possible to say this with certainty, since Tertullian does not develop his argument except by a passing reference to I Cor. 5:7 (*Expurgate...sicut estis azymi*). Tertullian interprets *carnis* in its most literal sense, that is, as referring to the offender's physical body; his opponent in this debate would have viewed it in the same way. The use of I Cor. 5:13 shows that Tertullian definitely viewed the punishment as involving excommunication. He is particularly concerned to demonstrate that Paul's God is one who imposes judgment (*contra* Marcion's idea that Paul's God was a God of love, judgment being the characteristic of the God of the Old Testament). Tertullian does not say who is to impose the punishment, although the passage in question seems to view the entire Church as being the executor of the sentence. Hans von Campenhausen says:

We can no longer trace in detail the emergence of the institution of penance...In essentials it must have been complete sometime during the second half of the second century...In Tertullian, at the turn of the second and third centuries, the institution of penance is already firmly developed in Africa, and is known to all Christians as a standard piece of ecclesiastical machinery...In the early stages there can hardly have been fixed, generally binding rules as to whether and when a penitent could be received back into the community. It is obvious that the monarchical bishop, where there was one, must have had an important say in the matter. It was he who was primarily responsible for

³Hanson, "Notes on Tertullian's Interpretation of Scripture", JThS 12 (n.s.), 1961, p. 275.

⁴Barnes, *Tertullian*, p. 55.

the conduct of the Eucharist, and therefore in the last resort it was he in conjunction with his presbyters in whose hands rested the decision to exclude or to admit the sinner. But equally obviously for the same reason he could not act unilaterally or arbitrarily...For both expulsion and the giving of the "Pax" are in principle always a matter for a decision by the whole Church, in whose various members Christ is at work, not for an exercise of episcopal or clerical privilege.⁵

Tertullian's belief in the necessity for this punishment appears in his earlier work, the *Apologeticum*:

Ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes et censura divina. Nam et iudicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de dei conspectu, summumque futuri iudicii praeiudicium est, si quis ita deliquerit, ut a communicatione orationis et conventus et omnis sancti commercii relegetur.⁶

In addition to the reference to I Cor. 5:13 cited above, which certainly points toward excommunication, there are two others in which Tertullian utilises a very different interpretation. In Book V, chapters 14 and 18, he opts for a spiritualising understanding of that verse, whereby each Christian is to remove evil from himself or herself. This is an interpretation which Augustine adopts two hundred years later in his arguments with the Donatists.⁷ It is interesting to see that Tertullian cites I Cor. 5:13 in isolation from the rest of the chapter; when he puts it in its proper context, he views it as referring to excommunication. In Book IV, chapter 9, he takes a stance indicating his belief in the necessity of excommunication. He compares an offender with the lepers in the Old Testament, who were expelled from the community of healthy Israelites; the Church, says Tertullian, must do likewise with offenders. He shows himself to be in full agreement with Paul on the principle of shunning sinning Christians (I Cor. 5:11):

⁵von Campenhausen, *EAASP*, p. 217.

⁶*Apologeticum* 39, 4; *CSEL* LXIX, p. 92.

⁷e.g., in *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani*, III, 2, 15.

...quae in exemplo leprosi non contingendi, immo ab omni commercio summouendi, communicationem prohibebat hominis delictis commaculati, cum qualibus et apostolus cibum quoque uetat sumere; participari enim stigmata delictorum quasi ex contagione, si qui se cum peccatore miscuerit.

He voices a similar sentiment in *Ad uxorem* II, 3, 1, when he says that if believers marry Gentiles [i.e., unbelievers], they are guilty of fornication and "are to be excluded from all communication with the brotherhood in accordance with the letter of the apostle, who says that, 'with persons of that kind there is to be no taking of food even.'"⁸ Thus we see that Tertullian holds to a thoroughgoing expulsion of sinners from the life of the Christian community.

Tertullian's treatment of I Cor. 5 in *De pudicitia* is much lengthier, and his tone is far more virulent when he attacks the lenient stance of the "Pontifex maximus", whose clemency may account for the sharpness of Tertullian's attack. Against the arguments of those who say that the Church should never judge (chapter 2), he shows that, to the contrary, the Church has been given power to judge the heinous sins within her midst (citing I Cor. 5:12, in which Paul says that he is not to judge those without the fellowship, but those within). His most concentrated treatment of the Corinthian text, however, begins in chapter 13. Here he takes issue with those who identify the penitent sinner of II Cor. 2:5-11 with the offender of I Cor. 5. Poschmann notes:

Die Behauptung, daß Paulus den Blutschänder wieder aufgenommen habe, beruhe auf einer verkehrten Exegese...Positiv macht Tertullian geltend die durch den Dekalog und das Aposteldekret erwesene untrennbare Zusammengehörigkeit des Ehebruchs mit Götzendienst und Mord...sodann das Verhalten des hl. Paulus gegen die schweren Sünder, der nicht nur in Fall des Blutschänders, sondern auch durch viele andere

⁸ANCL XI, p. 295.

Tertullian insists that Paul's advice in II Cor. 2 is not commensurate with the severity of the punishment which he imposed on the offender in I Cor. 5; consequently, they must be two separate people. Tertullian says, "*Quid hic de fornicatore, quid de paterni tori contaminatore?*" (13,4)¹⁰ He says that it is not normal human behaviour to grant forgiveness so easily to someone guilty of so heinous a sin. Robert Dick Sider notes:

This is, indeed, one of the more striking illustrations in Tertullian of the very old rhetorical topic of "probabilities of human conduct"...it thus lends a rhetorical cast to the entire chapter, which substantiates our view that the exegetical techniques found in the chapter as a whole have rhetorical roots.¹¹

Tertullian also states that if the offender in II Cor. 2 had been guilty of such a grave sin as fornication, Paul would have mentioned it. He notes that even the laxists of his day, when leading to repentance those who are guilty of grave sin, make the nature of the offence known.¹² Noting Paul's charge to the Thessalonians, not to associate with anyone who refused to accept his words, but to admonish him as a brother and not as an enemy (II Thess. 3:14ff.), Tertullian says that, to an incestuous man (*incesto*), not even love is to be given; the evil man should be taken away, not only from their midst, but also from their heart (*de animo*). The passing reference to I Cor. 5:13 should be noted; here Tertullian is taking the words at face value, saying that excommunication is absolutely essential in such a case, with no hint of a spiritualising interpretation. We see here Tertullian's belief that there are certain sins which are absolutely irremissible by the Church.¹³

⁹Poschmann, *Paenitentia Secunda*, p. 335.

¹⁰CSEL XX, p. 243.

¹¹Sider, *Ancient Rhetoric*, p. 92.

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 243-4.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 244.

Tertullian then attacks the point of view that identifies the *carnis interitum* with the penalties undergone by the penitents, a view which will be seen in the works of Origen.¹⁴ Tertullian says that the purpose of those who argue in that fashion is to prove that offenders are handed over to Satan for correction, rather than destruction, as though they could attain to forgiveness by the affliction of the flesh.¹⁵ He briefly examines II Cor. 12:7-10, which refers to Paul's thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan given to him to prevent his becoming proud, and I Tim. 1:20, in which Hymenaeus and Alexander were delivered to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme. Tertullian's opponents have been appealing to these passages to demonstrate the correctness of their view of the remedial nature of penance. Tertullian notes that Paul's situation in II Cor. 12 was completely different from that of Hymenaeus and Alexander, since he received the promise of divine grace, which those given over to Satan cannot receive.¹⁶ Sider notes that, "to deny the validity of the comparison was a standard rhetorical mode of refuting an argument from analogy..."¹⁷ Tertullian then indulges in some of the special pleading noted by Hanson¹⁸ when he says that the ones who were to "learn not to blaspheme" were not Hymenaeus and Alexander, but the Church. He says that being handed over to Satan means excommunication [*id est extra ecclesiam proiectis*]. He then states categorically that the incestuous man was handed over to Satan for destruction and not for correction:

sic igitur et incestum fornicatorem non in
emendationem, sed in perditionem **tradidit satanae**, ad

¹⁴e.g., *Homily XII* on Ezekiel, *Homily I* on Ps. XXXVII.

¹⁵*Op. cit.*, CSEL XX.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 245.

¹⁷Sider, *op. cit.*

¹⁸Hanson, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

quem iam super ethnicum delinquendo transierat, ut discerent fornicandum non esse.¹⁹

Tertullian's use of *discerent* should be noted; it agrees with his idea that Hymenaeus and Alexander were punished so that the Church should learn not to blaspheme. Referring once again to the Corinthian situation, Tertullian says that if Paul had meant merely to prescribe penance for the incestuous man, he would have said, "*in cruciatum carnis*," rather than, "*in interitum carnis*".²⁰

Tertullian concludes chapter 13 by saying the "spirit" which is to be saved is not the man's spirit, but the spirit of the Church, which he does not identify with the Holy Spirit. He says that the spirit of the Church "must be shown forth *safe in the day of the Lord*--that is, free from the contagion of impurity after the incestuous fornicator has been expelled. He adds, indeed: *Know ye not that a little leaven spoils the whole lump?* And yet incestuous fornication was not a little leaven but a lot."²¹

In chapter 14 of the same work, Tertullian argues that the man in II Cor. 2:7-11, whom Paul urges the church to forgive, is possibly a man who is puffed up (I Cor. 5:2), but certainly not the incestuous man. He precedes this with a remarkable passage:

pro quo lugerent? utique pro mortuo. ad quem lugerent? utique ad dominum, ut quo modo **auferatur de medio eorum**, non utique ut extra ecclesiam detur. hoc enim non a deo postularetur quod erat in praesidentis officio, sed ut per mortem hanc quoque communem et propriam carnis ipsius, quae iam cadauer corruptium esset et immunditia inrecuperabili tabiosum, plenius de ecclesia deberet auferri. et ideo, quoquo modo interim potuit auferri, iudicauit dedendum eiusmodi **satanae in interitum carnis**. maledici enim eam sequebatur, quae diabolo proiciebatur, ut

¹⁹CSEL XX, op. cit.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 245-6.

²¹ACW 28, p. 90.

sacramento benedictionis exauctoraretur numquam in
castra ecclesiae reuersura.²²

Although Tertullian has said nothing about how the sentence of excommunication has been imposed, he here notes that it is in the power of the presiding officer to impose it. Le Saint has noted, "In the present passage...the context quite clearly shows that the reference is to the bishop alone"²³ [i.e., not to bishops and priests]. Here, too, he goes farther than in his comments concerning Hymenaeus and Alexander; he says that the "taking away" is more than excommunication; Tertullian, Le Saint notes, would have us believe that Paul desires the physical death of this heinous offender, who is already spiritually dead.²⁴ Tertullian believes that death is only fitting for one who is already rotting due to his sin.²⁵ Thus Tertullian interprets the *interitum carnis* in a strictly literal fashion; the flesh refers to the body and the destruction refers to death. Although his sentiments here are far stronger than in *Adversus Marcionem*, his understanding of "flesh" here remains the same.

It is perhaps this very understanding of "flesh" that causes Tertullian to view the punishment as possibly involving the death of the offender, although his vehemently rigorous stance would perhaps incline him to believe this, too. His exegesis of "flesh" is strictly in reference to the body; there is no attempt to view it in the light of Paul's use of σάρξ in (e.g.) Romans 7 and 8. For Tertullian, the flesh here is identified with the body, and since the flesh is handed over to destruction, it is quite possible for him to believe that Paul envisioned the death of the offender.

Tertullian's remark that a curse followed the flesh given over to Satan, so that it might be deprived of the sacrament of blessing²⁶, is noteworthy. Le Saint notes that

²²CSEL XX, p. 248.

²³ACW 28, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵CSEL XX, p. 248.

²⁶*Ibid.*

it probably refers to the grace of baptism, by which the offender had been first enlisted in the Christian militia; he is now dishonourably discharged.²⁷

Sider notes:

- In the final sentences of the chapter [Tertullian] argues that the Apostle has followed a dishonourable course if he only rebukes the fornicator. The appeal to that which was more honourable both for the opponents to accept and the author to have written is, we may recall, specifically mentioned by Cicero in his treatment of cases involving ambiguity...²⁸ Thus far Tertullian has relied chiefly for his argument on the rhetorical topics of close verbal analysis, of the honourable and expedient, and of the character of the author. In chapters 15-17 he completes his debate on the question of identifying the offender of 2 Cor. 2 by an extensive use of another important topic for ambiguity; examination of the whole document in which the ambiguity arises, and appeal to the other writings of the Apostle in order to conjecture what the author was likely to have intended.²⁹

In chapters 15-17, Tertullian hammers home his argument that the respective passages in I and II Corinthians refer to two different men; he appeals to other statements of Paul, in II Corinthians itself (chapter 15), I Corinthians (chapter 16), and then in the apostle's other writings (chapter 17) to show that Paul would never have abandoned the rigorism evident in I Cor. 5:1-5. This procedure of Tertullian shows his concern to come to a correct understanding of a text by a thorough exploration of relevant scriptures, an attitude which authors have noted. Bertrand de Margérie has noted:

Plus généralement, Tertullien inculque avant tout la nécessité de procéder du connu à l'incertain, et d'expliquer les passages obscurs par l'ensemble des passages clairs...³⁰

²⁷ACW 28, p. 253.

²⁸Sider, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 94.

³⁰de Margérie, *Les Premiers Grands Exégètes Latins*, p. 27.

Tertullian's very emphasis on a correct understanding of the Scriptures, and his desire to show where the Church of his day was erring, calls into question the judgment of G.L.Bray when he says:

...Tertullian wished to impose a stricter moral regime than the one the Apostles had tolerated. He therefore had to show that the moral behaviour of the New Testament Church, including the Apostles' advice, was inferior to the precepts which these same Apostles had laid down as normative.³¹

There is no indication in this portion of *De pudicitia* that Tertullian is blaming the Apostles for falling beneath the level of their own advice; on the contrary, Tertullian implies that Paul not only gave advice and precepts, but also stood by them.

In chapter 18, Tertullian cites I Cor. 5:9-11 without further commentary, revealing himself to be in full agreement with the shunning of disobedient brothers which is advocated by Paul.³² However, Tertullian views this as being a breach of fellowship which will have no restoration in this world, a view which goes beyond the scope of Paul's words. To support his idea of a permanent exclusion of serious offenders, in the same chapter Tertullian cites I Cor. 5:12, in which Paul says that he has no authority to judge those who are outside the Church; Tertullian implies that they were once inside the Church and are now outside, with no possibility of an entrance. Later in the same chapter, he makes a very slight reference to the command not to eat with Christians who have once more fallen into sin, saying that if Paul had envisioned a restoration of them, he would have adjured the Corinthians not to eat with the excommunicated ones *nisi posteaquam caligas fratrum uolutando deteraserint...*³³ This last passage is one of a series of three paired statements which give an insight into the practice of exomologesis. They read as follows: 1) *nolite*

³¹Bray, *Holiness and the Will of God*, p. 109.

³²CSEL XX, pp. 259-60.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 261.

communicare operibus tenebrarum (Eph. 5:15), *nisi paenitentiam egerint*; 2) *cum talibus ne cibum quidem sumere* (I Cor. 5:11), *nisi posteaquam caligas fratrum uolutando deteraserint*; and 3) *qui templum dei uitiauerit, uitiabit illum deus* (I Cor. 3:17), *nisi omnium focorum cineres in ecclesia de capite suo excusserit*.³⁴ Although Tertullian is implying that these are the logical arguments which his opponents would espouse, and with which he totally disagrees, his incidental descriptions of the customary behaviour of penitents in the Church vividly illustrates the congregational life of his time.

This concludes the overview of Tertullian's use of I Cor. 5:1-5. Since I Tim. 1:20 also makes use of the *tradere Satanae* terminology, Tertullian's other uses of that passage must also be examined (his treatment of it in *De pudicitia* has already been observed).³⁵ There is one passing reference to those who deserted Paul, Hymenaeus among them, in *De praescriptione haereticorum*,³⁶ but there is no further reference to the verse. However, in *De fuga in persecutione*, there is a more important mention of this text. Tertullian is discussing the place which the devil occupies in persecution, and he insists that it is power which he holds only under God; it is not power which he holds *ex proprietate*.³⁷ Tertullian says that *ex causa reprobationis traditur ei peccator quasi carnifici in poenam*,³⁸ using the experience of King Saul, who was tormented by "an evil spirit from the Lord" (I Sam. 16:14), as an illustration. Tertullian's concept of *carnifex* is taken up in later times by Jerome, who uses the word *questionariis* (torturers);³⁹ the Greek equivalent to *carnifex*, δῆμιος, is used by John Chrysostom⁴⁰

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵cf. above, pp. 6-7.

³⁶*De praescriptione haereticorum* 3,11.

³⁷*De fuga in persecutione*, 2,9.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 2,8.

³⁹e.g., in his comments on Joel 2:25-7 (PL XXV, 973).

⁴⁰e.g., in *De Diabolo Tentatore* 2 (PG XLIX, 261-2) and *In Principiorum Actorum* III (PG LI, 95-6).

and Theodoret⁴¹. Here we encounter the idea of Satan being used as the executor of the divine punishment. In this context, Tertullian refers to I Tim. 1:20, presumably by memory, since he refers to Hymenaeus and Alexander as Phygelus and Hermogenes (mentioned in II Tim. 1:15). The remainder of the sentence, however, is a clear reference to I Tim. 1:20: *tradidit satanae, uti emendentur, ne blasphement*.⁴² Tertullian's use of *emendentur* here is not consonant with his later stance in *De pudicitia*. *De fuga* is probably slightly earlier than *De pudicitia*.⁴³ In this case, since the edict which aroused Tertullian's wrath had not yet been issued, he would have been content merely to cite the Scripture to prove a different point, which in this case is the idea that God permits the devil to test the saints through the *carnis vexationem*, that through their tolerating of it, *virtus...in infirmitate perfici possit* (II Cor. 12:9). Thus, *De pudicitia* shows a development in Tertullian's understanding of I Tim. 1:20; it amounts to a complete reversal. In spite of the Montanist tone of *De fuga in persecutione*,⁴⁴ he cites this passage in a manner congruent with his stance on the possibility of a second repentance in *De paenitentia* 7-12.

Thus, this is yet another instance of Tertullian changing theological stance during the course of his life. We know that in Tertullian's earlier work, *De paenitentia*, he allows one (but only one) penance for a major sin following baptism⁴⁵; in *De pudicitia*, this is ruled out. Likewise, *De fuga in persecutione* represents a change in Tertullian's thinking; previously, he has affirmed that flight from persecution is not evil⁴⁶, but now he maintains that Christians should refuse to flee,

⁴¹e.g., in his comments on I Tim. 1:20 (PG LXXXII, 795-8).

⁴²*Ibid.*, 2,9.

⁴³Barnes, *op. cit.*, p. 55, suggests 2-3 years earlier.

⁴⁴Quasten, *Patrology* II, p. 310.

⁴⁵*De paenitentia*, chapter 7.

⁴⁶*Ad uxorem* 1, 3.

since persecution is sent by God⁴⁷. The third instance is the one we have noted in his treatment of the phrase in I Tim. 1:20; at the time of *De fuga in persecutione*, Tertullian sees nothing wrong in saying that the offenders were surrendered to Satan in order that they learn not to blaspheme; in *De pudicitia*, it is the *Church* which must learn not to blaspheme when offenders are irrevocably handed over to Satan.

In his treatment of I Cor. 5:3-5 in *De pudicitia*, Tertullian lays out the two positions clearly; we are in no doubt concerning the opinion of either the Catholics or Tertullian. T.P. O'Malley has noted that, "Tertullian writes, and thinks, in terms of oppositions..."⁴⁸ This is certainly evident in *De pudicitia*. Sider's observation of the rhetorical basis of Tertullian's argument in the central chapters of the work has been noted.⁴⁹ In his clear presentation of two opposite sides and in his rhetorical method of argumentation, Tertullian the lawyer becomes visible. Yet he never loses sight of the goal he is pursuing; the rhetoric never becomes an end in itself but rather serves as a means to an end: the idea of proving that some sins are so serious that they cannot be forgiven by the Church. It is important to stress the words, "by the Church"; Tertullian says that a person who has fallen into such sin may be forgiven by God, but not by the Church.⁵⁰ Von Campenhausen remarks:

For God [according to Tertullian] is not only gracious, but also strict and righteous. Every day he is tolerant enough of those lesser sins from which we can never, alas! entirely refrain. He also allows more serious offences to be expiated by the regular procedures of penance, and to be forgiven through the Church. But in the case of really grievous sins this permission is withdrawn. These come under his own judgment, and in this matter no earthly tribunal may obstruct him. Even in cases such as these the sinner may still do

⁴⁷*De fuga in persecutione*, chapter 4.

⁴⁸O'Malley, *Tertullian and the Bible*, p. 126.

⁴⁹cf. above, pp. 4 and 10.

⁵⁰*De pudicitia* 3,5.

penance, and it may be that on the strength of this God will in fact grant him forgiveness; but from the Church he has absolutely nothing more to hope for on earth.⁵¹

Tertullian does not specify his ideas as to the exact relationship of the man in I Cor. 5 with his father's wife (i.e., actual marriage, concubinage, cohabitation, etc.). He is content to refer to the offender as *incestus*. This perhaps reflects his cautious approach to Scripture, which has already been seen in his careful overview of the Pauline epistles to prove that the individual mentioned in II Cor. 2:5ff. could not be the same one mentioned in I Cor. 5.⁵²

Tertullian's idea of the punishment is that it absolutely must involve excommunication. The remarkable passage in chapter 14 has been noted, in which Tertullian also suggests that the punishment will also involve physical death.⁵³ However, Tertullian does not pursue this; his main aim is to secure the excommunication of heinous offenders; the aftermath does not overly concern him at this point. He may also be aware that he is venturing into speculative areas, something which his pragmatic mind normally avoids.

Tertullian likewise does not say much concerning Paul's being present in spirit, though absent in body; at the very end of chapter 14 of *De pudicitia* he merely mentions that Paul "judged *in absentia*, lest the culprit profit by delay...".⁵⁴ He gives no indication as to whether he thinks that this power is still present with the Church of his day (whether Catholic or Montanist). His concern is that heinous offenders be expelled by the present Church, not by someone absent, i.e., an apostle or bishop or anyone else. Again, it is possible that Tertullian says little about this because of the speculation which it would involve.

⁵¹von Campenhausen, *EAASP*, p. 224.

⁵²cf. above, pp. 4-9.

⁵³cf. above, p. 7.

⁵⁴ACW 28, p. 95.

This leads us to Tertullian's ideas on the locus of power, and particularly the power to excommunicate, in the light of his treatment of I Cor. 5. The crux of the problem seems to lie in understanding Tertullian's statement in *De pudicitia* 14 (cf. above, p. 7), in which he refers to the presiding officer (*in praesidentis officio*). Le Saint has noted that, whereas other uses of the words *praeses* and *praesidere* in Tertullian's writings may refer to both bishops and priests, here it clearly refers to the bishop alone.⁵⁵ Likewise, at the end of chapter 18, Tertullian remarks:

quod si clementia dei ignorantibus adhuc et infidelibus competit, utique et paenitentia ad se clementiam inuitat, salua illa paenitentiae specie post fidem, quae aut leuioribus delictis ueniam ab episcopo consequi poterit aut maioribus et inremissibilibus a deo solo.⁵⁶

Watkins notes, "The reference to the bishop should not be overlooked. It appears to be the first definite statement in Christian literature that the bishop is the minister of reconciliation in the ordered Penance of the Church."⁵⁷ It should be noted that Tertullian does not argue against the institution of the episcopate *per se*. While his antipathy to the bishop who has declared that the Church may forgive even heinous sins is obvious, Tertullian does not deny that there is a place for the bishop, and that he is the normal executor of penance. This passage seems to call into question Barnes's statement that, "Tertullian resented the strengthening of episcopal control, which was partly designed to defend the church against Montanism."⁵⁸ While the latter part of the statement may be true, the first part is overstated. Tertullian is in favour of the bishop's strengthening of his control in legitimate areas (e.g., excommunication), but denies that he has any power at all to extend it into the area of heinous sins. He says:

⁵⁵*op. cit.*, ACW 28, p. 252.

⁵⁶*op. cit.*, CSEL XX, p. 261.

⁵⁷Watkins, *A History of Penance*, vol. I, p. 125.

⁵⁸Barnes, *Tertullian*, p. 141.

et ideo ecclesia quidem delicta donabit, sed ecclesia spiritus per spiritalem hominem, non ecclesia numerus episcoporum. domini enim, non famuli est ius et arbitrium; dei ipsius, non sacerdotis.⁵⁹

Tertullian thus insists on a spiritual man for bishop. Of course, for him this would mean a Montanist, and hence one who was a strict disciplinarian. The emphasis on spiritual qualifications for the episcopate are reminiscent of Origen,⁶⁰ although Tertullian's actual meaning is far removed from that of the Alexandrian. Origen was in favour of spiritual men precisely so that they could lead even heinous offenders to repentance and restoration in the Church; Tertullian is concerned that spiritual leaders excommunicate serious offenders permanently, with no possibility of restoration. It should be noted once again that Tertullian's problem is with the bishops then holding office (particularly the one who has elicited *De pudicitia*), and not with the concept itself. Quasten's remark, "Here the Montanist idea, contrasting the organized with the spiritual church, has reached its ultimate logical conclusion. The Church of the Spirit and the Church of the bishops are now in total opposition"⁶¹, seems to be overstated. However, it is certainly true that a study of Tertullian's usage of I Cor. 5 in *De pudicitia* reveals that his concept of the powers of the episcopate is "of more legal than dogmatic significance."⁶² The office of bishop does not carry any guarantee of unlimited power; the bishop and the laity can operate only within scriptural parameters. The Power of the Keys was given to Peter personally and not to the office of bishop, and this power will be exercised now by the spiritual man, either an apostle

⁵⁹*op. cit.*, CSEL XX, p. 271 (*De pudicitia* 21, 17).

⁶⁰e.g., in his homilies on Leviticus (6,6).

⁶¹Quasten, *Patrology* II, p. 331.

⁶²von Campenhausen, *EAASP*, p. 174.

or a prophet⁶³ (who may presumably also be a bishop); however, Tertullian insists that the power to remit sins has nothing to do with the capital sins of believers.⁶⁴

Remarks such as these reveal that, while Tertullian does not denigrate the existence of the episcopate, to all intents and purposes he voids it of any inherent power, since he also believes that the bishop must be spiritual to exercise the power of binding and loosing; his idea that an apostle or prophet will be the ones to operate the Power of the Keys would presumably make the episcopate unnecessary, if Tertullian's argument is followed to its logical end⁶⁵; however, he does not go so far in his statements. He does indicate that the power lies in the Holy Spirit, and only as believers experience that power and walk in obedience can they be assured that He will act.

De pudicitia demonstrates Tertullian's real focus in life, as noted by Bray:

Yet in the final analysis it was not baptism but the subsequent perseverance of the saints which was the subject closest to Tertullian's heart. It was after baptism in fact, and not before it, that the real struggle between the Spirit and the lusts of the flesh set in...For baptism was a rite of purification which did no more than restore the flesh and the soul to their natural state. As far as the soul was concerned that was enough; its divine origin was sufficient to ensure its ultimate redemption. But the flesh was still an earthly substance with all the weakness which had caused Adam to sin in the first place...For not only was it possible to lose for ever the redeeming virtue of Christ's passion; without constant vigilance and discipline such an eventuality was only too probable.⁶⁶

The question which must be asked is whether Tertullian's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 will bear the weight he assigns to it. Certainly his careful comparison of the

⁶³*De pudicitia* 21.

⁶⁴*op. cit.*, CSEL XX,1, P. 270.

⁶⁵Although he does not imply that there are still apostles in the Church of his day.

⁶⁶Bray, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

passages in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2 is very impressive, and his conclusion that the passages refer to two separate individuals has been echoed by the writings of many modern scholars.⁶⁷ However, one must ask whether Tertullian's ideas on the purity of the Church may not have influenced his decision at this point, in spite of his careful study of the Scriptures. Tertullian appears in *De pudicitia* to be a man with his own personal axe to grind; this is perhaps not surprising if we consider his rhetorical background, but it also represents his own passionate insistence on a strict lifestyle for Christians, as noted by Bray in the citation in the preceding paragraph. His concept of the Church colours his exegesis of the passage. Le Saint has remarked, "One hardly knows which is the more remarkable--his readiness in quoting Scripture or his genius for distorting it."⁶⁸ In spite of his vehemence, he still shows caution when he refuses to venture into speculation, which reflects not only his pragmatic bent, but perhaps also his passion for truth. However, the vehemence is far more obvious than any reticence. Barnes has characterised *De pudicitia* as "a long, abusive, and sometimes hysterical diatribe."⁶⁹

In summary, Tertullian in his Montanist period thinks that serious sins are beyond the forgiveness of the Church. He refuses to allow the identification of the sinner of I Cor. 5 with the offender of II Cor. 2. He views the punishment imposed by Paul as excommunication at the very least, with the possibility of death as a result. When he addresses the question of whether the apostolic Power of the Keys is still within the Church, he speaks of "men of the Spirit" exercising the power, which indicates its abiding reality to him, but its operation is dependent on personal sanctity and spirituality. He does not rule out the office of bishop, but a bishop is only a steward; if he is non-spiritual, or if he ventures into areas where he should not, he is

⁶⁷e.g., Plummer, Goguel, and Fee.

⁶⁸Le Saint, in ACW 28, p. 42.

⁶⁹Barnes, *Tertullian*, p. 141.

useless. The future of the Church lies with the men of the Spirit. These are not only those who are part of the Montanist thinking on the New Prophecy; they are those who are obedient soldiers of Christ, victors over the warring lusts of their own flesh. For those who fail in this test, God may forgive them, but the Church never will. Thus, Tertullian's particular stance at the time of the writings of *De pudicitia* definitely colours his exegesis; Paul's sentence passed on the Corinthian offender becomes an illustration of the rigorous Montanist policy of permanently expelling a Christian convicted of a serious sin.

It will be seen that Tertullian is definitely in the minority in his thinking. Le Saint notes, "Patristic exegesis, it may be pointed out, is unanimously opposed to Tertullian on this question..."⁷⁰ Yet, in the progress of this thesis, it will be seen that Tertullian's exegesis is one of the three main ways of approaching I Cor. 5:3-5. He said that the punishment was final for this life, and that restoration to the Church was absolutely impossible. The destruction of the flesh referred to the expulsion of the offender from Christian fellowship, with the possibility of death ensuing.

⁷⁰ACW 28, p. 241.

APPENDIX A:

LATIN WRITERS OF THE THIRD CENTURY

In addition to its presence in the writings of Tertullian, I Corinthians 5 appears in two other Latin writings of the third century.

1. The first occurs in the eighty-seven *Sententiae* pronounced by various bishops at the Seventh Council of Carthage (A.D. 256) under the leadership of Cyprian. In the concluding passages of this account, we find the following:

Natalis ab Oea dixit: Tam ego praesens quam Pompeius Sabratensis, quam etiam Dioga Leptimagnensis, qui mihi mandaverunt, **corpore** quidem **absentes**, **spiritu praesentes**, censemus quod et collegae nostri, quod haeretici communicationem habere nobiscum non possunt, nisi ecclesiastico Baptismo baptizati fuerint.¹

The allusion to I Cor. 5:3-4 (*corpore absentes...spiritu praesentes*) is clear. However, there are some marked differences in the manner in which Natalis cites the text and its original context. Paul had *already* judged an offender, though absent in body; Natalis states that Pompey and Dioga have delegated power to him for a judgment (vote) which had not yet taken place. Likewise, there is no question of Paul's delegating this power to the Corinthian congregation; he himself judged the offender, although he was not present. Pompey and Dioga are delegating Natalis to speak for them at the time of decision.

It is apparent that the bishops see some correlation between apostolic power and their own, but it is not defined. If they believe the bishops to be full heirs of the apostolic powers, this is not stated; but they do hold to some correspondence between apostolic and episcopal powers.

¹PL III, 1112.

2. The other Latin reference to I Corinthians 5 is found in the writings of Novatian. In chapter 6 of *De bono pudicitiae*, he speaks firmly against violations of marriage:

Hinc [sententiam] Christus quando uxorem dimitti non nisi ob adulterium dixit interrogatus tantum honorem pudicitiae dedit. Hinc nata est illa sententia: **Adulteras non sinetis uiuere** [Lev. 20:10]. Hinc apostolus dicit: **Haec est uoluntas Dei, ut abstineatis uos a fornicatione** [I Thess. 4:3]. Hinc et illud dicit: **Membra Christi membris meretricis non esse iungenda** [I Cor. 6:15]. Hinc traditur **satanae in interitum carnis** qui proculato iure pudicitiae uitia carnis exercet.²

This passage appears between Novatian's strong approval of marriage as an institution of God (chapter 5) and his extolling of the good of celibacy (chapter 7). The Corinthian passage is cited as an illustration that the violation of the marriage vow is not good; given the context, this may imply that he views the father of the offender as still living. Beyond this, we can say little concerning his exegesis of I Corinthians 5.

²CCL IV, pp. 117-8.

Chapter 2

EARLY EGYPTIAN WRITERS: CLEMENT AND ORIGEN

I

There is only one reference to I Cor. 5:3-5 in the surviving works of Clement of Alexandria. It is found in a fragment from the lost Ὑποτυπώσεις surviving only in a Latin translation entitled *Adumbrationes*, which goes back to Cassiodorus.¹ The passage occurs in his explanation of I Peter 4:5-6:

Qui reddent, inquit, rationem ei, qui paratus est iudicare vivos et mortuos. Hi secundum praecedentia erudiuntur iudicia. Ob hoc etiam subiungit: Propter hoc enim et mortuis evangelizatus est, nobis videlicet, qui quondam exstabamus infideles; ut iudicentur quidem secundum hominem inquit in carne, vivant autem secundum deum in spiritu. Qui a fide videlicet exciderunt, dum adhuc in carne sunt, iudicantur secundum iudicia praecedentia, ut paeniteant. Idcirco etiam subnectit, dicens: **vivant secundum deum in spiritu.** Sic Paulus quoque; nam et ipse tale aliquid dicit, **quem tradidi, inquit, satanae, ut vivat spiritu.**

2

Here Clement interprets one difficult passage (I Peter 4:5-6) by citing another (I Cor. 5:5). He understands Peter's reference to being judged in the flesh to refer to the time when the readers were not Christians, and the judgment (which he does not specify) was to bring them to faith in Christ. He then states that those who *a fide...exciderunt* are judged in order to bring them to repentance. In this context he says that Paul executed this sort of punishment upon the man in Corinth, implying that the object was repentance. Brief though this reference to the Corinthian text is, it reveals some of Clement's thinking about the purpose of penance. The contrast with Tertullian is

¹Quasten, *Patrology* II, p. 17.

²*Clemens Alexandrinus* III (GCS), pp. 205-6.

obvious; whereas Tertullian in *De pudicitia* insists that penance for serious sins is absolutely impossible, Clement states that the judgment of God is for the precise purpose of bringing offenders to repentance. Poschmann states:

Plato's influence on Clement is decisive in the latter's conception of the elimination of sin as a purification or healing. Although it occupies the foreground it does not altogether displace the idea of expiation.³

Clement's passage above certainly illustrates the idea of penance being a purification; and his use of *vivat* in his loose citation of the Corinthian text (where the Greek equivalent does not appear) may do more than echo the *vivant* of the Petrine passage; it may represent more of Clement's understanding of I Cor. 5:5. Of course, the question must be asked whether this Latin translation is a faithful rendering of Clement's Greek original, and that must remain a matter of conjecture; but the terms used in the *Adumbrationes* certainly echo what Poschmann has said above. He adds:

The psychological and therapeutic mode of conceiving it which was introduced by Clement was henceforward to give its special stamp to penance in the Greek Church. It explains the high esteem accorded to 'directors of souls' who gave such effective assistance to a penitent in the process of his healing by admonition and prayer.⁴

This understanding of penance will be clearly detected in the works of Origen (cf. below).

Poschmann has noted that, in Clement's thought, the removal of sin was by a gradual process, not by an instantaneous act; Christians who do not labor in this life to put away inordinate attachment (πάθη) "will have to continue the purification by the much more painful punishments of the hereafter...".⁵ However, this is no latent universalism; purification is available only for repentant Christians. "Consequently,

³Poschmann, *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick*, p. 64.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 64.

final salvation is in every case dependent on penance done in this life."⁶ Clement agrees with Hermas that there is only one great repentance allowed for serious sin after conversion;⁷ he illustrates this by the story of St. John's full restoration of a lapsed Christian youth who had joined a gang of robbers.⁸

Clement's other references to I Cor. 5 do not add significantly to our understanding of his exegesis of vv. 3-5. Several occur in Book III of the *Στρωματεῖς*, chapter XVIII. Here Clement is discussing two extremes: total abstinence from marriage and complete sexual abandon. Concerning those who adopt the latter attitude, Clement cites I Cor. 5:7, ἐκκαθάρατε τὴν παλαιὰν ζύμην, ἵνα ᾗτε νέον φύραμα.⁹ He then proceeds to quote I Cor. 5:11 (containing Paul's exhortation to the Corinthian Christians to avoid any professing Christian guilty of flagrant sin) without comment and then moves on to Gal. 2:19-20, in which Paul speaks of his being crucified with Christ. Thus we see that Clement is interpreting the Corinthian reference to the removal of the old leaven of impurity in an individual context, rather than in its original congregational setting. This understanding of the text, that all Christians are to remove the evil from themselves individually, has already been seen in Tertullian¹⁰ and will be seen in the work of Augustine, particularly in *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani*.¹¹ Shortly after Clement's reference to I Cor. 5:7, he also cites I Cor. 5:9, in which Paul clarifies his former advice to the Christians not to mix with fornicators. Clement then addresses the opposite extreme from libertinism by showing that Paul does not regard marriage as fornication. He passes on to I Cor. 6:13, in which Paul states that the body is not for πορνεία, but for

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 63; Quasten, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-2.

⁸In *Quis dives salvetur?*

⁹*Clemens Alexandrinus II (GCS)*, p. 245.

¹⁰in chapters 14 and 18 of Book V, *Adversus Marcionem*.

¹¹e.g., III, 2, 15.

the Lord. Thus, in this passage, Clement utilises I Cor. 5 to show that it is necessary for Christians to avoid sexual impurity; what happens if and when they fall into it, he does not address here. This is in keeping with much of Clement's writings. Tollinton has noted:

His references to the details of Church life are comparatively scanty, and this allusive character often raises rather than resolves inquiry. The reason of this is two-fold, nor does it lie far to seek for one who will bear in mind the characteristic features of Alexandria, and the mental temperament of Clement. For indeed the great city...loved nothing less than order and definition. In all the principal departments of ecclesiastical organisation, in respect of the Ministry, of the Sacraments, of the Creeds, and of the Canon of Scripture, Alexandria was notably behind the other great Churches in the rate of its development...but the further, perhaps the principal reason, lies in his own temperament and affinities. He is a Christian philosopher. He is a forerunner of the mystics, if even he does not belong to their company. He is a Platonist, and cares more for the idea than for its partial and concrete embodiments. So he does not set great store by form and rule and details of Church order, and had not the Gnostic heretics carried liberty too far, he would probably have cared for such things even less.¹²

Clement has only two other references to I Cor. 5 in his writings; he uses both *en passant*, and they contribute nothing more to our understanding of his exegesis of vv. 3-5. In Book II, chapter I, of the Παιδαγωγός, he is discussing the proper attitude toward eating, and he notes that Paul forbade the Corinthian Christians to eat with certain people, but that at other times, there is nothing wrong with eating *per se*.¹³ In Book V, chapter X, of the Στρώματαίς, he notes Plato's remark that those who inquire after God should offer a "great and difficult sacrifice"¹⁴, and then cites I Cor. 5:7,

¹²Tollinton, *Clement of Alexandria*, II, pp. 103-4.

¹³*Clemens Alexandrinus I (GCS)*, p. 161.

¹⁴*ANCL*, XII, p. 261.

describing Christ as "a sacrifice hard to procure, in truth, the Son of God consecrated for us."¹⁵

In conclusion, Clement's scanty references to I Cor. 5 reveal some of his characteristic emphases; penance as a healing from the disease of sin, the preference for dealing with the inner spiritual reality rather than the hard practical facts of everyday life in the Church of his time, and a personalised, individualistic interpretation of I Cor. 5:7, indicating that all Christians are to cleanse themselves of sin. Although we know that Clement believed in the necessity of excommunication for serious offenders, his inner spiritualising bent would be in favour of interpreting I Cor. 5:7 in an individualistic manner.¹⁶ He states that, "the control of ecclesiastical discipline is in the hands of the rulers of the Church in their capacity of pastors of the faithful" (*Paed.* I 6,37,3; *Strom.* II 15, 69, 2-3),¹⁷ but Tollinton notes the absence of any hint of Apostolic powers being inherent in the Episcopal office.¹⁸ Clement is more concerned with the development of Christian 'gnostics' than with the question of hierarchical power. Thus, his use of I Corinthians 5, limited as it is, reveals and echoes a considerable amount of this man's approach to Scripture.

II

Clement's references to I Cor. 5 are few; with Origen we are faced with the opposite difficulty. B.J. Kidd has remarked, "The difficulty is to summarize the teaching of Origen without misrepresenting him; and the danger is that of isolating particular phrases, the very danger into which the Arians, who claimed him as their master, fell."¹⁹ Origen's vast output is saturated with citations of Scripture, and I Cor.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶This is not in opposition to the excommunication of offenders; but Clement's preference is for the inward, personal application of scriptural truth.

¹⁷Poschmann, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

¹⁸Tollinton, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

¹⁹Kidd, *A History of the Church to A.D. 461*, I, p. 422.

5 appears with considerable frequency. My general procedure will be first to examine the surviving *Catena*e from Origen's homilies on I Corinthians, in order to study his ideas in the immediate context of the text itself; after that, I will examine passages from the other works citing the Corinthian text. My procedure here will be to study the commentaries and homilies on other books of the Bible first, proceeding from them to the treatises. Also, due to Origen's numerous references to I Cor. 5, I will subdivide the study into three parts: first, vv. 1-2, showing Origen's understanding of the situation at Corinth; second, his comments on vv. 3-5, the focus of Paul's direction to the Corinthians; and last, his comments on the other verses in I Cor. 5 (i.e., vv. 7a, 9, 11, and 13) which might indicate something of his exegesis of vv. 3-5. I will also include a survey of his use of I Tim. 1:20, which uses the παραδοῦναι τῷ Σατανᾷ terminology.

A. VERSES 1-2

1. In *Catena* XXIII of Origen's homilies on I Corinthians, he indicates his opinion that the offender had actually married (ἡγάγετο) his stepmother (μητρὸν); at this point, he is more definite than Paul, who merely states that the man had the wife of his father. Origen goes on to say that such a marriage, according to Paul, is not a marriage, but is πορνεία, and the other Corinthians, although personally innocent of his sin, are actually partakers of it by allowing him to meet with the Christian body.²⁰ Origen here does not concentrate on the Corinthians' being πεφυσιωμένοι; he is more concerned to demonstrate the situation which has elicited this forceful passage from Paul. In *Catena* XX, Origen also makes a passing reference to Paul's rebuke τοῖς πεφυσιωμένοις, but does not comment further.²¹

In these comments, Origen is concerned to stick closely to Paul's actual meaning. He does not attempt to allegorise anything here. He makes it clear that he

²⁰Jenkins, "Origen on I Corinthians", *JThS* IX (1907-8), p. 363.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 361.

thinks that the offender should be banned from the Christian assembly; the Church is guilty by allowing the unreprieved sinner to meet with them. At this point, Origen does not say anything about how, or by whom, the expulsion is to be done; since Paul is rebuking the congregation as a whole, Origen here implies that the congregation has a part to play in seeing that the offender is removed from their fellowship, but he does not say whether it is the congregation as represented by the bishop, or the congregation as distinct from the bishop. However, it should be noted that Origen does imply that the congregation has a responsibility in the excommunication of the offender.

2. There is a very full reference to I Cor. 5:1-2 in Origen's first homily on I Kings (LXX). He is discussing the existence of bitter and sweet things side by side, of good things and bad things co-existing (in reference to Elkanah and Peninnah, Hannah and Samuel, Hophni and Phineas). He then cites I Cor. 5, saying that the epistle has both sweet and bitter things in it, and that this combination should characterise sermons.²² He does not dwell further on the Corinthian text.

3. In his seventh homily on Ezekiel, treating chapter 16:28-30 of that book (concerning the harlotry of Jerusalem), Origen briefly mentions I Cor. 3:2, in which Paul said that he had to feed the Corinthians with milk. Origen says that, by contrast, Paul was able to feed the Ephesians with solid food when he wrote to them, because "fornication was not heard of" in the Ephesian congregation.²³ He thus implies that sin is a real barrier to receiving the deeper things of the Word of God. At this stage, Origen is treating the *πορνεΐα* quite literally.

4. In his treatment of Peter's promising never to deny Christ in Matt. 26:22, Origen cites various scriptures about the danger of boastfulness and spiritual pride,

²²PG XII, 997.

²³In *Ezech. hom.* 7, 10; GCS, *Origenes Werke* VIII, p. 399.

concluding by saying that we must not be puffed up or proud.²⁴ This is a very brief reference (surviving only in a Latin translation), but it probably refers to the Corinthians, puffed up with pride when there was a dreadful situation in their midst, even as Peter, boasting, was soon to deny that he knew Jesus.

5. Origen also refers to those who are "puffed up" in his comments on Matt. 23:12 (comm. series 12). The text is treating the excoriation of the Pharisees by Jesus, who has just said, "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted" (RSV). Origen says:

quod utinam omnes quidem audirent, maxime autem diaconi et presbyteri et episcopi, maxime qui arbitrantur sibi haec non esse scripta: *qui se exaltaverit, humiliabitur*. propter quod quasi neque illud scientes, *qui se humilia<veri>t, exaltabitur*, non audiunt eum qui dixit: "discite ex me quoniam mitis sum et humilis corde". inflati sunt autem, et per inflationem decidunt "in iudicium diaboli", nec quaerunt per humilitatem ascendere a iudicio inflationis...²⁵

This is a characteristic passage for Origen, in that it is one in which he indicates that all was not well among the holders of ecclesiastical power. Von Campenhausen notes:

Origen is no radical opponent of "clericalism", like Tertullian; but he is the first penitential preacher of the clerical profession, and it is to the conscience of the members of that profession in his audience that he is often particularly concerned to speak...if, from a sense of moral responsibility, he does from time to time come down to the lower levels of the Church's everyday problems, yet he is always glad when he can leave them behind, and deal only with the true "mysteries" of spiritual and allegorical exegesis. Nevertheless, whenever Origen does decide to speak in this way about the realities of the Church, and the life of her officials, what he has to say is impressive and serious...we hear

²⁴ Comm. ser. 81 on Matthew; *Origenes Werke* XI (GCS), p. 191.

²⁵*Origenes Werke* XI (GCS), p. 24.

far more complaints and accusations concerning the spiritual failure of the clergy in their proper calling. More than half the relevant passages strike this note of bitter criticism and concern.²⁶

But von Campenhausen rightly notes that "in no sense was he championing the rights of the laity against the clergy...".²⁷ Origen does not deny the power of these ecclesiastical officials to judge; he is concerned about the pride which their position has occasioned them. The passage cited above illustrates von Campenhausen's point, as will other references examined in the course of this chapter. However, this one does not reveal much about Origen's understanding of the situation in Corinth.

6. An important reference to vv. 1-2 occurs in a homily on Jeremiah preserved in a Latin translation by Jerome. Origen is discussing Jer. 22:28, in which the prophet asks if King Jeconiah is a despised, broken pot (RSV), since he is going to be exiled from Israel. This leads Origen to say that all vessels of wrath must be cast from the Church, even as Jeconiah, the useless vessel, was cast into Babylon. Origen then says that this is what Paul was recommending in Corinth; he follows with a full citation of vv. 1-2.²⁸

Of these references to I Cor. 5:1-2, the ones listed in paragraphs 1, 3, and 6 are the most important for seeing Origen's understanding of the situation at Corinth. He does not attempt to spiritualise the sin of the offender, but sees it as something quite serious, which must be dealt with by the congregation. Paragraph 5 is important because of its highlighting of one of Origen's main concerns: the substandard behaviour of church officials. Paragraph 6 shows his belief in the necessity of expulsion for serious offenders, a belief which will be seen repeatedly in his exegesis of vv. 3-5.

²⁶von Campenhausen, *EAASP*, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 249.

²⁸*Homélie sur Jérémie*, II, pp. 322-5.

B. VERSES 3-5

Origen's references to vv. 1-2 are comparatively scarce; his references to vv. 3-5 are prolific. The reason for this is that Origen sees the passage as "en somme...le type biblique du péché sujet à la pénitence ecclésiastique...".²⁹ Poschmann has likewise noted that, for Origen, "The example of the incestuous man at Corinth is the biblical norm for the penitential procedure...".³⁰ Thus, the passage figures strongly in his frequent mentions of penance. In studying Origen's use of the text, I will break it down into several portions to examine Origen's comments on each one.

The first part of the text to be addressed is vv. 3-4: ἐγὼ μὲν γάρ, ἀπὼν τῷ σώματι, παρὼν δὲ τῷ πνεύματι, ἤδη κέκρικα ὡς παρὼν τὸν οὕτως τοῦτο κατεργασάμενον ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, συναχθέντων ὑμῶν καὶ τοῦ ἐμοῦ πνεύματος σὺν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

1. In his surviving *Catena* Origen notes³¹ that Paul uses similar language in Col. 2:5, in which he says that, present in spirit, he can see the order and the firmness of the Colossians' faith in Christ. Origen says that none of us can do that. Noting the supernatural character of what Paul has in mind, Origen says that this is what Elisha experienced when he stood in spirit by Gehazi when the latter took a gift from Naaman the Syrian (II Kings 5:19-27). Origen says that this shows that Paul was not only an apostle, but a prophet. Since he was able to be present in spirit but not in body, he was able to be wherever he desired; it is not only a being present in spirit, but with the power of the Lord Jesus.

In his use of the story of Elisha and Gehazi, Origen was a pacesetter, as was so often the case. We will find others among the patristic writers who take this same line

²⁹Rahner, "La Doctrine d'Origène sur la Pénitence", *RSR* 37 (1950), p. 77.

³⁰Poschmann, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

³¹Jenkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 364-5 (*Catena* XXIV).

of thought, most notably Chrysostom,³² who used it frequently; for him also it was the natural cross-reference to make in his exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-4. Origen's statement that none of us has the same power does not seem to answer the question of whether that power is still resident in the Church or not; rather, he is stating that mere human nature does not have that power. The question of whether the Church has the power or not does not enter into his thinking at this point.

2. Origen has four references to I Cor. 5:3-4 in his various commentaries on Matthew. In Tom. XVI, 21, he is treating the story of Jesus driving the moneychangers out of the temple (Matt. 21:12-13).³³ Origen believes that this is a picture of the Christian life. Jesus whips us as sons in order to receive us; when we are gathered together with the Holy Spirit, then the power of Jesus enters and casts out buyers and sellers in the temple. This is a classic example of Origen's inner, spiritualising approach to the Bible. It is a particularly interesting reference because he seems to have a corporate cleansing in mind rather than an individual one. This certainly suits the original context of the passage in I Corinthians. Yet, given Origen's predilection for spiritualising, one is hesitant to say that the buyers and sellers being cast out are sinners being expelled from the Christian assembly, although Origen is strongly in favour of this (cf. below); it is at least equally possible that Origen here has in mind the sins in the lives of the believers; those are the objects of Christ's discipline. If this is the correct reading of the passage, Origen envisions the Church in assembly, with the risen Christ coming in power to discipline His people by ridding them of the sins in their lives. In spite of his inner spiritualising bent, Origen's writings reveal him to be a true churchman, and von Campenhausen has rightly noted that, for Origen, the Power of the Keys is closely bound up with the existing ecclesiastical system of his day; he never thinks of questioning the existing penitential

³²e.g., *Homily XV* on I Corinthians, *in loc.*

³³*Origenes Werke X (GCS)*, p. 548.

system.³⁴ In the current passage, Origen says that when Jesus performs this cleansing, it is to chastise and flog (παιδεύση καὶ μαστιγώσει) us as sons; this ties in with the medicinal concept of penance which has already been noted in the writings of Clement. This theme will be conspicuous in the portion of this chapter treating Origen's comments on v. 5.

3. The next reference to vv. 3-4 occurs in Origen's treatment of Matt. 21:45-6 (Tom. XVII, 14), in which the Jewish leaders are attempting to arrest Jesus. Origen uses this passage to attack heretics, who do not rightly understand Christ. He says that, to be gathered with Christ, one must have a proper understanding of him; he then cites I Corinthians 5:3-4 *en passant*.³⁵ Little is added to our knowledge of Origen's exegesis of this verse.

4. The final references to vv. 3-4 found in Origen's comments on Matthew come from *catenae*. Both occur in Commentary Series 65, and both treat Matt. 25:14, which begins the parable of the talents. Origen views the master in the parable as Christ, and he asks how the omnipresent Lord can be said to be "away", as the master in the parable is said to be. He cites I Cor. 5:3-4 and says that, as Paul was absent in body but present in spirit, this must somehow be true of Christ. He does not treat the Corinthian passage further, but decides that Christ is present "face to face" though absent in body, and though he is present, he is seen through a glass darkly.³⁶ In the other *catena*, Origen, addressing the same question, says that Christ is absent from us in regard to his humanity, but with us in regard to his deity; he cites I Cor. 5:3-4, with regard to the church being gathered with the power of the Lord Jesus, to prove his point.³⁷

³⁴von Campenhausen, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

³⁵*Origenes Werke X (GCS)*, pp. 624-5.

³⁶*Origenes Werke XII (GCS)*, pp. 205-6 (*catena* 503).

³⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 206-7 (*catena* 504).

5. In addition to the references in the homilies and commentaries on books of the Bible, there is an important citation of I Cor. 5 in Origen's treatise, *De oratione* (31,5). Origen, discussing the best place for prayer, judges that when the church is gathered together, there is also present a congregation of angels. He cites I Cor. 5:4 to show that the power of Jesus is also present. He also feels that, if Paul could be present in spirit, there is also a possibility that the spirits of the blessed departed could be present, too. Therefore, the place where the faithful congregate is especially conducive to prayer. This is an idea which he mentions in *Contra Celsum* VIII:64; Origen says that all good angels, souls, and spirits are kindly disposed to Christians, since they perceive those who are worthy of God's kindness, and work together with them. He then adds, "Consequently we dare to say that for men who of set purpose put forward higher things when they pray to God, there are praying with them countless sacred powers who have not been invoked, assisting our mortal race."³⁸

This passage is a fascinating one because it touches on Origen's idea of spiritual hierarchies. Rahner has noted:

Il envisage l'ensemble du réel (anges, démons, hommes, matière, histoire) non pas comme une somme d'êtres séparés que seul totaliserait le Créateur, mais comme une réalité profondément une et hiérarchisée, dans laquelle tout, nature et histoire, est produit et coordonné par l'unique Logos...Ainsi, chaque chose a sa place propre, et tout est en fin de compte image et ressemblance de l'unique Logos...En conséquence, l'Église a aussi une structure sacramentelle en tous ses éléments (Christ, Église visible, Écriture, Hiérarchie, Culte, Sacrements). On y distingue une "couche" extérieure, celle des signes (corps historique de Jésus, lettre de l'Écriture, hiérarchie externe, sacrifice visible, corps eucharistique, baptême d'eau, etc.), qui introduit à la réalité spirituelle présente en eux, agissant en eux et par eux. Cette réalité (Logos, union interne de l'Humanité au Logos, sens spirituel de l'Écriture, Hiérarchie intérieure correspondant aux liens avec le

³⁸*Contra Celsum*, tr. and ed. H. Chadwick, pp. 500-1.

Logos, Sacrifice intérieur du Christ et des chrétiens, manducation du Logos, Baptême dans l'Esprit) se cache et se révèle à la fois dans ces signes. Ces deux "couches" ne s'opposent pas l'une à l'autre. Elles ne sont pas non plus simplement juxtaposées, mais leur rapport est dynamique. La première est la "corporalité" de la seconde; la seconde s'accomplit par la première, et la première devient réelle par la seconde. Il s'ensuit que la hiérarchie externe (évêques, prêtres, diacres) est absolument reconnue par Origène: il y voit une institution divine, sans laquelle l'Église ne saurait être pensée...³⁹

I will discuss Origen's ideas on priesthood more fully later in this chapter; the emphasis in the current citation of the Corinthian text is on the presence of other "orders", particularly in respect to prayer. Origen's belief in the correspondence and linkage of hierarchies definitely enters into this citation of the Corinthian text.

In the commentaries and homilies, Origen's first two references to 5:3-4 are the most important for determining his understanding of the text in its original setting. It is interesting to see that both times he places it firmly in a disciplinary context. The story of Elisha and Gehazi ends with the latter being stricken with Naaman's leprosy; the account of the moneychangers leads Origen to say that Jesus comes to his temple (the church) to cleanse it. Perhaps the comparative scarcity of Origen's references to this part of vv. 3-5 is because he ties it in with discipline and realises that the real focus of the passage is in the next verse. As will be seen, he devotes much time and thought to it. In verses 3-4, he does not address questions which we might regard as crucial, i.e., whether the bishops have inherited apostolic powers or whether this type of situation was still happening in the church of his time. The second reference favours the latter statement, but even it says nothing about whether episcopal power is to be identified totally with the apostolic power. The reference from *De oratione* is crucially important for showing Origen's idea of a variety of spiritual presences in a meeting of the church; not only are the Christians present, but also the spirits of the

³⁹Rahner, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-1.

blessed departed, and the Lord Christ himself, working in power (Origen does not mention the angels in this context, although he probably would state that they were present also; cf. Rahner, above). Given this exalted company, it is not surprising to see that Origen believes that divine power can be at work in the congregation. In his comments on I Cor. 5:3-4, he indicates that in Corinth the power of Christ was working through Paul, enabling him to do supernatural things. It will be seen below that Origen definitely believes that the Power of the Keys exercised by the church of his day is related to the endowment Paul experienced; whether it can be identified fully with that power, so that the bishops are full heirs of all the apostolic powers, will be discussed then.

The next words of the Corinthian text are: παραδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ Σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ.

1. In the *Catena*, Origen notes that Paul surrendered the man's flesh, not his soul or spirit. The apostle did not know (οὐκ εἰδὼς) that the man would repent and return (a reference to Joel 2:12), but desired him to be disciplined. Origen says that such a man was thrown out by Paul just as a sheep having scabies (or mange: the Greek is ψώραν) is cast out by the shepherd for the sake of the safety of the rest of the flock. Here Origen is touching not only on the man's future, and what the punishment will effect in him, but he is showing concern for the rest of the Christian flock. His ensuing words give a vivid picture of the penitential system active in the Church of his day, as well as giving us an insight into his understanding of the word σαρκός in the Corinthian text. He says:

Θεραπευέσθωσαν οὖν οἱ κακῶς διάγοντες ἔξω γενομένοι τῆς ποιμένης, ἐξομολογούμενοι καὶ πενθοῦντες τὰ ἴδια ἀμαρτήματα, ἐν νηστείαις καὶ πένθεσι καὶ κλαυθοῖς καὶ τοῖς παραπλησίοις τὰ τῆς μετανοίας προσάγοντες. παραδίδονται γὰρ ἵνα παιδευθῶσιν, ὥστε αὐτῶν ὀλοθρευθῆναι τὴν σάρκα,

τοῦτ' ἔστι τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός [a reference to Rom. 8:6-7]. οὐχ ἵνα ἄλλο τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτῶν ἄψηται, οὐχ ἵνα ἐκστήσῃ αὐτούς, οὐχ ἵνα ἄλλο τι ποιήσῃ, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἐξουσίαν λάβῃ μόνης τῆς <σαρκός> αὐτῶν, οὐκ ἐμοῦ διδόντος τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐν ἐμοὶ δυνάμεως τοῦ Ἰησοῦ.⁴⁰

It will be seen that this passage shows Origen's teaching I Cor. 5 quite fully. His mention of ψώραν has already taken him into the medical realm, and now he develops this train of thought, which is characteristic of his views on penance, as it is in Clement's thinking. Two citations from *Contra Celsum* will show how this is a recurring theme in Origen's thought. In III:75, he says, "Christian doctrine does not teach that unconsciousness or loss of reason will be inflicted on a bad man as a punishment, but shows that troubles and punishments are applied by God to bad men as medicines to convert them. This is the view of intelligent Christians..."⁴¹; and in IV:69, "Even though everything had been arranged by Him at the creation of the universe to be very beautiful and very steadfast, yet nevertheless He has had to apply some medical treatment to people sick with sin and to all the world as it were defiled by it."⁴² Rahner has noted that, "Sans aucun doute, le châtement a chez Origène un sens tout médicinal. L'idée d'un châtement purement vindicatif, qui ne serait rien autre que l'expression de la dignité inconditionnée de la Loi morale, lui est étrangère."⁴³ The offenders are to be healed by their penance; the performance of ἐξομολόγησις is designed to bring this about. It should be noted that Origen says that the offenders must go outside the flock in order to be healed, thus stressing his belief in the necessity of excommunication, but with a view to restoration; he thus touches on the necessity of preserving the rest of the flock uninfected. Rahner remarks that, "En revanche, il semble avoir été exclu du culte religieux, et non de la seule

⁴⁰Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

⁴¹*Contra Celsum* (Chadwick), p. 179.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 239.

⁴³Rahner, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

eucharistie. Des expressions comme "exire de coetu et congregatione Ecclesiae" ou "a conventu Ecclesiae abscindi", qui font une distinction entre l'Église et son assemblée, sont à prendre au sens le plus réaliste."⁴⁴ The soul is not to suffer [eternal] burning, but the body must go through the discipline of the church before restoration can occur.

This passage is particularly noteworthy because it gives us Origen's understanding of σάρξ; he takes it in the sense of the "mind of the flesh" which, according to Paul, is "hostile to God" (Rom. 8:7). He then explains why Paul says only that the man's spirit will be saved; Origen views πνεῦμα as the highest part of man, and thus that word is representative of the entire person. He goes on to say that Paul in his second [Corinthian] epistle urges the man to be received again into the Church. This is obviously a reference to II Cor. 2:5-11, and Origen's identification of the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2 will be seen repeatedly in his works. Poschmann has noted, "Die Identität des nach 2 Kor. 2,5 ff. Wiederbegründeten mit dem Blutschänder aus I Kor. 5 steht ihm dabei außer Zweifel."⁴⁵ An understanding more far removed from that of Tertullian would be hard to envision. Tertullian insists that the "flesh" which was to be destroyed was the actual physical body; Origen says that it is the mind of the flesh, not the body *per se*, which will be destroyed. Tertullian is emphatic that even heavy penance will not restore serious offenders to the Church; Origen is just as emphatic that it will. Tertullian says that the spirit to be saved in the day of the Lord is the spirit of the Church; Origen assumes that it is the spirit of the offender. Tertullian recoils from the very idea that the offender of I Cor. 5 could be the man mentioned in II Cor. 2; Origen has no qualms about doing exactly that. Tertullian makes it clear that some of his opponents were making the identification, but they remain nameless; Origen is the first writer known to have adopted this stance, but he is by no means the last. It will

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, II, p. 270.

⁴⁵Poschmann, *Paenitentia Secunda*, p. 445.

be seen in the course of this thesis that in this, as in so many other areas, Origen was the pacesetter, and he thus had a heavy influence on the developing penitential doctrine and practice of the Church.

From this passage, we will move on to examine Origen's other references in the homilies and commentaries.

2. In *Homily 16* on Genesis, Origen refers to chapter 47 of that book, in which Joseph buys up the land from all the Egyptians for Pharaoh. He contrasts the difference between voluntary slavery (to which the Egyptians submitted by selling themselves to Pharaoh) and the enforced slavery of Israel in the time of Moses. Origen exonerates Joseph of blame in submitting the Egyptians to slavery, since they did it voluntarily; he compares this to what Paul did to the Corinthian offender. Paul was the agent "who cast a man out of the Church and delivered him to Satan", but the blame was laid at the door of the man "who by his actions deserved that there be no place in the Church for him, but deserved to be joined to the fellowship of Satan."⁴⁶ Origen here notes that the offender was put out of the Church and had no one to blame for it but himself (this is always an emphasis in Origen; he strongly rebels against any determinism which denies the freedom of the human will; cf. the next passage below for an example); he does not comment further.

3. In a surviving fragment on Exodus 10:27 (concerning the hardening of Pharaoh's heart), Origen thinks that Pharaoh was hardened as a result of his own sin, and that it was only temporary. He attaches a list of people who were hardened for a time as a result of sin, but who were ultimately restored: the list includes Ananias and Sapphira (who, he holds, were restored in the moment of death), Demas, Elymas, and Hermogenes, and "the one also in Corinth who had the wife of his father, and who was delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh so that his spirit might be saved

⁴⁶*Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, FC 71, pp. 215-6.

at the day of the Lord." ⁴⁷ At first glimpse, this might sound as though Origen thinks that the offender will die and be restored only in the afterlife, since this is what happened, according to him, in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. However, they are the only ones in Origen's list who died; this fragment will not sustain that argument, especially in the light of all the other references which show that Origen believed in a restoration for the offender in this life. Origen's emphasis on the freedom of Pharaoh's will is important, since in another context he states that it is the evil deed of an offender which excommunicates him, and that the ecclesiastical sentence is an externalisation of what has already taken place in the offender's life.⁴⁸ Rahner notes, "Exigée par la nature du péché mortel, [la séparation] doit rendre visible ce qui est déjà accompli aux yeux de Dieu: la séparation d'avec l'Église au for interne."⁴⁹ As to the hardening of Pharaoh's heart being temporary, Hal Koch has shown that Origen compares God to a king or householder who sometimes faces an uproar among his vassals, and who chooses the suitable punishments for them. He then adds:

Oft ist es so, dass die Ärzte wohl die Krankheit aufhalten könnten, aber wenn sie es täten, würde sie nicht ausgerast haben, und man müsste dann befürchten, dass sie bald wiederkehre. Das Klügste ist daher, mit der Kur zu warten, bis das Böse seinen Höhepunkt erreicht hat, damit die Heilung definitiv werden kann. Dasselbe gilt von Gott gegenüber gewissen Sündern, wenn er sieht, dass war Pharaos. Sie sollen die Sünde auskosten, bis sie gesättigt sind. Während es sonst Gottes Wohltat ist, zu strafen, war gegenüber die Verhärtung, d.h. die Erlaubnis, weiter zu sündigen ohne Strafe, das beste Mittel. Wer die Schrift recht versteht, wird denn auch in der Verhärtung Pharaos die Güte werden, demnächst gegen die Ägypter, von welchen viele den Juden folgten, und zuletzt, aber nicht am geringsten gegen Pharaos selbst, der das verborgene Gift an den Tag brachte, und, indem er die Bosheit zur

⁴⁷*Philocalie* 21-27: *Sur le Libre Arbitre*, pp. 294-8.

⁴⁸Poschmann, *Paenitentia Secunda*, p. 446.

⁴⁹Rahner, *op. cit.*, II, p. 271.

Handlung kommen liess, ihr gleichsam die Kraft raubte.⁵⁰

4. The homilies on Leviticus have some important material concerning Origen's understanding of I Cor. 5:5. The first reference occurs in *Homily 3,4*. Origen is treating Lev. 5:1-6, concerning the guilt offering for sin which becomes known only later. Origen says that at the very outset of our iniquities, we should offer a sacrifice of penitence, delivering our flesh to destruction so that the spirit can be saved at the day of the Lord. He says that, if we do this, it will be said to us that we have received our evil things in this life (Lk. 16:25) and may rest content in "this place" (Latin *hic*),⁵¹ presumably Heaven.

This passage shows Origen's inward, spiritual approach to Scripture. There is no mention of a priest to offer the sacrifice, no mention of the externals of any formal rite of penance, or anything else of that sort. He is concerned here to bring all offenders to penitence, and he stresses the importance of the inner attitude, an awareness of guilt; he associates the "destruction of the flesh" with the penitential procedure, as he does in the citation from the *Catenae* in I Corinthians, which shows that he may have the outward rite of the Church in mind as well as the inner attitude, but the latter assumes the importance here.

More important is a passage from *Homily 14,4*, concerning the son of an Israelite woman and an Egyptian man who named the name of God with a curse (Lev. 24:10-23). The young man in the story was punished with death, and Origen compares the capital punishment inflicted in Lev. 24 with what happens in penance in New Testament times. He says that the "destruction of the flesh" refers to the afflictions of the body normally suffered by penitents. Origen says that it confers life to the spirit, and he proceeds to encourage his audience to seek refuge in penance

⁵⁰Koch, *Pronoia und Paideusis*, pp. 130-1.

⁵¹*Homélie sur le Lévitique*, I, pp. 140-3.

when they are found guilty of any fault⁵² and to esteem the voluntary destruction of their flesh, that, *expurgatus in praesenti vita spiritus noster mundus et purus pergat ad Christum Dominum nostrum...*⁵³

This approach to the Old Testament and its fulfilment is highly characteristic of Origen. Instead of something as obviously physical and visible as capital punishment, we now have an inner spiritual occurrence. The priesthood of the old covenant is now surpassed by that of the new, and as the priests in the old covenant officiated in the imposition of capital punishment, so now the priests of the new are in charge of imposing the "capital punishment" of penance, for the destruction of sin. Origen does not actually mention the priests here, but he refers to a penitential system already in place, and we know that he believed this to be the sphere of the authority of the recognised leaders of the Church. Poschmann has noted:

Equally as evident as the unlimited efficacy of penance is the part played in it by the Church. The rulers of the Church are physicians, helpers of the supreme physician. For this reason wounds must be shown not only to God but also to the priests...⁵⁴

Rahner notes that in the eleventh homily on Leviticus (11,2), Origen says that the priest would not dare to impose such a penalty, "mais la *paenitentia*, si on l'accepte de plein gré, efface les péchés..."⁵⁵ One thing worth noting in the passage from homily 14,4 is the phrase *in praesenti vita*; Origen firmly believes that forgiveness and restoration are possible in this life. Rahner notes:

Ce qui nous intéresse davantage, c'est de savoir si Origène connaît et fonde en principe une possibilité de pardon pour les péchés mortels dès cette vie...Il faut répondre affirmativement. Origène ne tient pas pour un

⁵²It is in this homily that he states his belief that some penitential punishments take longer than others, some lasting even beyond this life.

⁵³*Origenes Werke VI (GCS)*, pp. 486-7.

⁵⁴Poschmann, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

⁵⁵Rahner, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

rigorisme qui déclarerait impossible ou douteux dans cette vie un pardon divin des péchés mortels. Ses doctrines sur la liberté de la créature spirituelle, sur l'amour de Dieu et sur le caractère salvifique des châtiments nous en persuadent par avance.⁵⁶

Origen's remark that the destruction of the flesh refers to the afflictions normally suffered by penitents is worth noting; it is precisely this thinking that Tertullian attacks in *De pudicitia*, refusing to accept that argument.

4. The next passage to be examined comes from the homilies on Numbers (19,4). Origen is treating Num. 24:1-24. concerning the prophecies of Balaam. In the first part of this passage, Origen views the Kenites and their dwelling in the rock as a symbol of Christians who abide in Peter, the Rock. Those who depart from the Rock are heretics. However, in the biblical passage, Balaam says that the Kenites will be taken captive by Asshur, and later Asshur will be afflicted by ships from Kittim. Origen views the affliction by Asshur as the End, when the power of Satan will finally be broken. He says that Asshur is the one to whom the sinners among the people of God are delivered for the destruction of the flesh to the end that the spirit might be saved.⁵⁷ Here Origen assumes the existence of sin among the people of God; he likewise states that believing Christians who sin are subjected to some sort of handing over to Satan and his forces, whom God uses to purify the sinners, although in due time the forces of evil will be crushed. Beyond this, the current passage adds little to our knowledge of Origen's exegesis of I Cor. 5; it is more illustrative of his exegetical principles, because it reveals how Origen tends to interpret the Old Testament in the light of contemporary ecclesiastical life. This same approach will be seen in his understanding of Nebuchadnezzar (cf. below, in his comments on Jeremiah), with similar deductions from the text.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁵⁷*Homélie sur le Nombres*, pp. 356-9.

5. In Origen's seventh homily on Joshua, he is discussing the sin of Achan (Jos. 7) and his destruction following the battle of Jericho and the fiasco at Ai. Origen blames the priests for not supervising things more carefully, thus allowing Achan to secrete some of the forbidden spoils in the floor of his tent. He then carries this over to the Church of his time, saying that the priests must not be derelict in the exposure of sin through the desire to appear indulgent and fear of the tongues of sinners. He says that they do not burn with zeal and do not imitate Paul, who instructed, "Give such a man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved."⁵⁸ Here we note Origen's criticism of the clergy of his time, which has already been noted above. However, he is not against the priesthood. Rahner has noted:

Dans la mesure où ce pécheur reste ainsi dans ce milieu de grâce par lequel seul son péché peut être effacé (puisque la grâce est celle de l'Église entière), Origène peut déclarer d'une façon tout à fait générale (sans même exclure les péchés mortels) que le péché du chrétien ne saurait être effacé sans l'intervention des prêtres et des *meliores*.⁵⁹

Origen is concerned that sin be punished; we see here his belief that excommunication as part of discipline is essential for the progress of the sinning Christian. Like Clement, he believes that it must be undergone in this life.

6. Origen's second homily on Judges has an important reference to the Corinthian text. He is treating Judges 2:12-13, which tells how the Israelites continued to worship idols, and how God consequently handed them over to their enemies. This passage (2,5) reveals something of Origen's understanding concerning the locus of authority in the Church. In this passage, Origen translates "plunderers" (RSV) as "Zabul", for which I have not been able to discover the etymology⁶⁰; context indicates it may refer to Beelzebul. Origen says:

⁵⁸*Homélies sur Josué* (7,6), pp. 208-10.

⁵⁹Rahner, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁶⁰It is not the word in the LXX, which uses "Baal".

Nos autem, **propter quos haec scripta** (evidently a reference to I Cor. 10:11) dicuntur, scire debemus quia, si peccaverimus Domino et animi nostri voluptates ac desideria carnis velut Deum colamus, tradimur etiam nos et apostolica auctoritate in manus Zabuli concedimur. Audi denique ipsum dicentem de eo, qui peccaverat: **tradidi** inquit **huiusmodi hominem Satanae in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus fiat**. Vides ergo quia et modo non solum per Apostolos suos Deus **tradidit** delinquentes **in manus inimicorum**, sed et per eos, qui ecclesiae praesident et potestatem habent non solum solvendi, sed et ligandi, **traduntur** peccatores **in interitum carnis**, cum pro delictis suis a Christi corpore separantur. Et, ut mihi videtur, dupliciter etiam nunc traduntur homines de ecclesia in potestate Zabuli: hoc modo, quo superius diximus, cum delictum eius manifestum fit ecclesiae et per sacerdotes de ecclesia pellitur, ut notatus ab hominibus erubescat et converso eveniat ei illud, quod sequitur: **ut spiritus salvus fiat in diem Domini nostri Iesu Christi**; alio autem modo quis **traditur Zabulo**, cum peccatum eius manifestum non fit hominibus, Deus autem, **qui videt in occulto**, perspicuus eius mentem et animos vitiis ac passionibus servientes et in corde eius non se coli, sed aut avaritiam aut libidinem aut iactantiam vel alia huiusmodi, istum talem ipse Dominus **tradit Satanae**. Quomodo eum **tradit Satanae**? Discedit a mente eius et avertit se et refugit a cogitationibus eius malis et desideriis indignis et derelinquit **domum** cordis eius **vacuam**. Et tunc complebitur in illo homine, quod scriptum est: **cum autem immundus spiritus exierit ab homine, circuit loca arida; et si non invenerit requiem, redit ad domum suam; et inveniens eam vacantem et mundatam, assumit secum septem alios nequiores se spiritus, et intrans habitat in domo illa; et tunc fient hominis illius novissima peiora prioribus** (Matt. 12:43-5). Hoc ergo modo intelligendum est Deum **tradere**, quos tradit, non quia ipse tradat aliquem, sed ex eo quod derelinquit indignos, eos scilicet, qui se non ita excolunt et a vitiis purgant, ut libenter in iis habitet Deus. Ipso refugiente atque avertente se ab anima, quae in immunditia ac vitiis posita est, tradita dicitur ex eo, quod Deo vacua invenitur et invaditur ab spiritu nequam. Et ideo nos summo studio vigilemus et festinemus purgare nos a vitiis et concupiscentiis malis, ut Deum intra nos tenere

possimus et ut habitare dignetur in nobis, dum
delectatur et actibus et sermonibus et cogitationibus
nostris...⁶¹

This lengthy citation is of crucial importance. For one thing, he states that there is a correspondence between the apostolic power and that exercised by the church leaders of his day. Although he does not say that the identification is complete, neither does he deny it. The church leaders are in possession of at least this share of the apostolic powers, whatever others there may be. We see again his belief that excommunication is involved. Taken with his statement about those presiding in the Church, we see that he is in full agreement with the penitential practice of his day, at least in its ideal performance; the preceding citation from the homilies on Joshua remind us that in practice it could be less than perfect. Once again, his emphasis on the repentance and reconversion of the sinner is noteworthy. The latter part of the passage is different, however; here Origen speaks of a man who departs from obedience in his mind and thus leaves it empty. He stresses that it is not really God who surrenders the man, but the man himself, who by his departure from God has left himself open to Satanic activity. This last portion of the passage in question is not related to the penitential procedure of the Church at all; it is more personal and individualistic an approach to the text. It is also in keeping with Origen's firm insistence upon the freedom of the human will.

7. Origen's various homilies on the Psalms contain several references to the Corinthian text. There is a brief reference to I Cor. 5 in a surviving *catena* on Ps. 118 (LXX). Commenting on v. 121 ("Do not hand me over to those who oppress me"), Origen states that, if we sin, that is precisely what will happen. That is the way in which Paul delivered the man in Corinth who had committed fornication, as were Phygelus and Hermogenes, who were delivered in order that they might learn not to blaspheme (I Tim. 1:20; Origen has the wrong names, drawing them from II Tim.

⁶¹ *Origenes Werke VII (GCS)*, pp. 478-80.



1:15, but the reference is clear), and this is also what happened to the children of Israel when they sinned; they were delivered to the nations.⁶² Just prior to this, Origen has stated that such a handing over is for the purpose of correction (ἐπὶ τῷ παιδευθῆναι). He does not spend further time on the text here.

More important are his comments on Ps. 37 (LXX). In a surviving catena on the passage οὐκ ἔστιν ἰάσις ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου, κ.τ.λ. (v.3), Origen says that this verse is like what was spoken by Paul concerning the Corinthian sinner, whom he surrendered to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord. He says that the spirit of the man cannot be saved unless his flesh undergoes this destruction, but he then repeats the line of thinking we have previously found in the *Catena* on I Cor. 5:5, saying that the flesh here means the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός. He states that the flesh (in this sense) of the sinner is alive, but the flesh of the righteous has died, and the righteous person can therefore say, "We bear the death of Jesus in our body at all times" (II Cor. 4:10). He then concludes: Τὸ οὖν παραδίδοσθαι εἰς ὄλεθρον τὴν σάρκα, τοιοῦτον ἐστὶν ἀποθνήσκει τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός, τὸ πνεῦμα σώζεται.⁶³ He says that the flesh must not be returned to health, and that the more it suffers, the more it experiences what this verse of the psalm is talking about. In his comments on v. 8 of the same psalm, he interprets ψόαι ("reins") in a sexual sense, saying that this is part of the mind of the flesh which must be destroyed.⁶⁴

In his first homily on Ps. 37 (LXX) Origen discusses the temptation of penitents to hate those who are inflicting pain upon them. He notes that, in the same way, the sinners in Old Testament times hated the prophets. He then says, "Let no one be cut off from medicinal discipline through neglecting correction." He proceeds to

⁶²*La Chaîne Palestinienne* I, pp. 384-5.

⁶³*Analecta Sacra* III, pp. 16-17.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 21-2.

say that one man in Corinth who *gravissime deliquerat* found mercy through penance. Reproved by the Apostle and excommunicated from the Christian assembly, he bore the difficult sentence strongly, and Paul then revoked the sentence and reunited the ejected one with the Church, saying, "Confirm love to him" (II Cor. 2:8). We see here Origen's identification of the offenders of I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2, and we also see his firm insistence on the necessity of penance, even when it is difficult.⁶⁵

Later in the same homily, Origen again refers to Paul's statement in I Cor. 5:5. He asks whether Paul's handing over of the sinner to Satan does not show that he desired the person's injury. On the contrary, Origen replies, it is much more likely that this occurred for the man's salvation. He then proceeds along the lines seen in the fragment from Ps. 37 cited above, that the "flesh" which must be destroyed is the mind of the flesh (*sensus carnis*), and that the righteous can speak of bearing about the death of Jesus in their bodies (II Cor. 4:10, as above).⁶⁶ In a reference *en passant* near the end of this homily, Origen says that the psalmist is advancing to the death of the flesh; the remedy comes by means of troubles. He does not comment further at this point, but the punishment is once again seen to be restorative.

8. Two *catenae* from Origen's comments on The Song of Songs which make use of I Cor. 5:5 have survived. The first one treats 6:12 and 7:1 (LXX) of that book. The bride is returning from the bath, and the friends of the bride desire her to turn back so that they may behold her. Origen interprets the bride as the Church, and the friends of the Church are those who desire to see her return to her pristine dignity. They foresee the time when the Church militant will become the Church triumphant. The current difficulties the Church is experiencing will serve a useful and fruitful end; given to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, she will come forth in victory, like

⁶⁵PG XII, 1370-1.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 1375.

ranks of armies (χοροὶ παρεμβολῶν).⁶⁷ This reference to the Corinthian text seems to be used in reference to the purging from the sin which still remains in the life of the Church. Given Origen's almost constant use of the passage in the context of penance, it is probable that he here envisions penance as the means of purifying the Church and restoring it to its pristine dignity.

The other *catena* is a fragment treating Song of Songs 5:7 (LXX). Origen here contrasts the virgin bride of Christ with the women who seek a lover other than Christ. The bride in this passage is beaten by the watchmen, and Origen says that she went τῷ παραδοθῆναι τῷ Σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκὸς, ἀφορισθέντα τῆς ἐκκλησίας μετὰ τό, καθάπερ ἔλεγε πρὸς τὰς νεάνιδας, εἰσαχθῆναι παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως εἰς τὸ ταμιεῖον αὐτοῦ'.⁶⁸ Again, it is likely that Origen has penance in mind, and if this be the case, brief though this passage is, it shows us his firm belief in the necessity for it, as well as its remedial nature; the bride is to be welcomed into the King's presence following the destruction of the flesh.

9. Origen has various uses of the Corinthian text in his homilies on Jeremiah, as well as some in the fragments from lost homilies on the same book. In *Homily 1,3*, Origen is discussing God's judgment of the Jews for their sins, and he compares their captivity to that which we experience when we sin. He cites I Cor. 5:5 and says that Satan is Nebuchadnezzar (τῷ σατανᾷ...ὄντι Ναβουχοδονόσορ).⁶⁹ Origen also refers to I Tim. 1:20, concerning those who were surrendered to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme. He then comments on how great an evil it is to sin and to be abandoned by God to Satan, and he stresses that this sort of thing does not happen without reason.

⁶⁷PG XVII, 279-80.

⁶⁸*Origenes Werke* VIII (GCS), p. 146.

⁶⁹*Origenes Werke* III (GCS), p. 3.

We have seen earlier in Origen's comments on Numbers 24:1-24 that he viewed Assur as a type of Satan; here he does the same thing with Nebuchadnezzar. This passage is also interesting because of its individualistic, personal approach to "captivity". There is nothing said about the Church at all here; the punishment is individual and inner. Hanson has noted that, "In practice his exegesis tends to ignore the local reference of prophecy altogether, and especially to sweep away with the broom of allegory all topographical references or anything obviously connected with the 'particularity' of the situation in which the prophecy was uttered."⁷⁰ He also states, "So extreme is Origen's account of the relation of Old Testament to New Testament that the reader is constantly tempted to conclude that for him there is no fundamental distinction between the revelation given in the Old Testament and that given in the New...In accordance with these convictions, Origen will readily interpret any part of the Old Testament as intended for the edification of the contemporary Church, theologians, clergy, or people, not, as *I Clement* or the Pastoral Epistles or almost any writer of the sub-apostolic literature might have interpreted it, as providing examples of good or warnings of bad conduct, or moral exhortations, specific or general, but as positively and specifically predicting the point or the situation to which he applies it."⁷¹ Origen's consistent understanding of the enemies of Israel in the light of the enemy of the Church (Satan) is a good example of the practice which Professor Hanson criticises.

The next passage to be studied occurs in *Homily 19*, 14, treating Jeremiah's prophecy to Pashhur after the latter had had Jeremiah arrested, beaten, and pilloried (Jer. 20:4-6). The text warns of the handing over of Jerusalem (including Pashhur) to the king of Babylon. Origen notes that, according to history, the king of Babylon is Nebuchadnezzar, but according to the anagogical sense he is the evil one, and the

⁷⁰Hanson, *Allegory and Event*, p. 197.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, pp. 202-3.

sinner is delivered to him, since he is both enemy and avenger (ἐκδικητής); in this context he cites both I Tim. 1:20 and I Cor. 5:3-5. He then notes that Jerusalem was made not only of stones, but of men, and as the men of Jerusalem went into captivity, likewise we also are menaced by the word of the prophecy if we sin, since Christians are now "Jerusalem".⁷²

This passage, with its reference to the anagogical sense in addition to the historical sense of Scripture, reveals Origen's famous multiple understanding of Scripture. There are similarities to the previous passage, but this one is more fully developed. Again, he omits any mention of the Church or excommunication; it is a personal handing over to Satan for chastisement. One of the most important things in this particular passage is Origen's concept of Satan as both enemy and avenger. Later church fathers are very concerned in their treatment of this text to discuss Satan's place in the divine economy, and Origen's remarks here presage this. In *Contra Celsum* VII:70, he says that, "like public executioners in cities and officers appointed for unpleasant but necessary work in states, wicked daemons are appointed for certain tasks by the divine Logos who administers the whole world..."⁷³ He reiterates this in VIII:31 of the same work. His word for "executioners" is δῆμιοι. This idea, and even the word itself, are taken up by Chrysostom and Theodoret, in particular (cf. below). Rahner has noted:

En outre (ou bien *en* tout cela), dans cette souffrance pénitentielle qui doit transformer l'homme par une mort, les Puissances supra-terrestres interviennent. L'*interitus carnis* s'achève dans un "transfert à Satan". Que ce transfert se reflète ou non dans l'aspect visible de l'Église par l'excommunication, lorsque Dieu abandonne le pécheur, le diable prend la place. Mais celui-ci n'est pas seulement ennemi de l'homme: il est

⁷²*Homélies sur Jérémie*, II, pp. 232-5.

⁷³*Contra Celsum* (ed. Chadwick), pp. 452-3.

aussi son ἐκδικητής, il est le bourreau qui punit de la part de Dieu.⁷⁴

A fragment treating Jer. 1:13-14 has survived; Jeremiah has seen a boiling pot ready to overflow Judah. Once again, Origen says that it represents the "enemy and judge". The one who sinned in blasphemy will be surrendered to Satan so that he be taught not to blaspheme; the one guilty of sexual impurity will be delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Origen then contrasts God's dealings among the inhabitants of the earth; those who live there will be burned, but those who only sojourn there (not being under the lordship of sin) will escape destruction.⁷⁵ Like the other passages from the homilies on Jeremiah, this one remains individualistic and personal in its application of the Corinthian text; nothing is said about the church. The contrast between those who live and those who merely sojourn on earth, as representing a spiritual reality in their lives, is an interesting one and points to a difference in Origen's thinking between the punishment meted out to those living in sin and the purification needed by believers. It must be asked whether Origen's coupling of sexual sin with the destruction of the flesh is significant. Since he quotes the passage from I Timothy in relation to the sin mentioned there, it seems that his combination of sexual sin and fleshly destruction is more contextual than anything else. We have also seen earlier, in his comments on Ps. 37 (LXX) that he viewed fleshly uncleanness as only part of the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός, which must be destroyed.

The final reference to the Corinthian text in Origen's works on Jeremiah occurs in a fragment treating Jer. 36:4-6, in which the prophet is banished from the temple. Origen compares Jerusalem to the Church, built from living stones, out of which anyone who is a sinner is cast and handed over to Nebuchadnezzar, "τῷ σατανᾷ". In this context he cites I Cor. 5:5, followed by I Tim. 1:20. He says that it is necessary to

⁷⁴Rahner, *op. cit.*, I, p. 87.

⁷⁵*Origenes Werke* III (GCS), p. 199.

expel such a one from the Church.⁷⁶ This passage, though similar to the others, does make mention of the Church, and Origen's belief in the necessity for excommunication is evident. What is perhaps more noteworthy is his complete reversal of the meaning of the original text: Jeremiah, the righteous one, was thrown out of the temple by the ungodly ones. Here Origen speaks of unrighteous ones being expelled from the Church by the godly.

10. Origen's homilies on Ezekiel contain two references to the Corinthian text. The first occurs in 3,8, which treats Ezek. 14:1-11; God is rebuking those who inquire of his prophets while still continuing to worship idols. Origen, after speaking of the necessity of a full commitment to God and an abandoning of all evil, moves into a lengthy and powerful exhortation concluding with a prayer:

Ne auferas nos, Deus omnipotens, de medio populi tui, verum conserva nos in populo tuo. Juste autem projicitur, qui digna facit abiectione, ut auferatur a populo Dei, et eradicetur ab eo et tradatur Satanae. Et in praesenti quidem potest quis egrediens de populo Dei, rursum per poenitentiam reverti; si vero eradicatus fuerit illo ex populo de quo in quadam parabola dicitur, venisse, et recubisse, et introisse quemdam qui non habebat vestimentum nuptiale...⁷⁷

Here Origen mentions again the expulsion of the offender who deserves it, although the door of penance is still open. The surrendering to Satan almost certainly has to do with the penitential procedure.

The other reference occurs in *Homily 12,3*, treating Ezek. 17:12-13. Origen says that when we stray from the path of righteousness, we make a treaty with Pharaoh, whom he regards as a type of the devil. As Israel suffered for their treaty with the king of Egypt, so must we. He then says that we must bear it patiently when we are surrendered to punishment by God. He notes that the Apostle surrendered a

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, p. 222.

⁷⁷*PG XIII*, 694.

man out of the Christian assembly to the devil for the destruction of the flesh, doing this "*non ut perderet traditum, sed ut spiritum traditi conservaret.*" Origen continues with a full quote of I Cor. 5:5. He then says that the sinner is surrendered to torments in order to receive his punishments in the present, with refreshment following in the future (presumably in Heaven), so that it can be said concerning him, that he received his evil things in this (earthly) life (Lk. 16:25). Origen then uses the offender of II Cor. 2 as an illustration that penance is meant to lead us to restoration, thus showing again his identification of that man with the offender in I Cor. 5.⁷⁸

By itself, this passage might lead us to think that Origen foresees restoration only in the future life, but Origen's frequent combination of I Cor. 5 with II Cor. 2 reminds us that he thinks restoration can definitely take place in this life. In this passage Origen uses the King of Egypt as he has used Nebuchadnezzar and Asshur previously, saying that they are types of the devil. In this passage, Nebuchadnezzar represents the righteous judgment of God on sin. Origen does not discuss the penitential procedure here; the "torments" could be either imposed by God (directly) or tied in with the procedure of excommunication or both.

11. Origen's first reference to I Cor. 5:5 in his commentary on Matthew occurs in Tom. XVI, 8, treating Matt. 20:25-8, in which Jesus refers to the princes of the people lording it over those beneath them. Origen says that the princes of the Church should serve it. Part of their duty is:

...δ' ὅτε χρὴ (κατὰ τὴν ἀποστολικὴν φωνήν) "τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας | ἐνώπιον πάντων" ἐλέγχειν, "ἵνα καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ φόβον ἔχωσιν". ἔστι δ' ὅτε δεῖ χρησάμενον τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ "παραδοῦναι" τινὰ "τῷ σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου". σπανίως δὲ τὸ τοιοῦτο ποιητέον· νοουητέον γὰρ "τοὺς ἀτάκτους" καὶ παραμυθητέον "τοὺς ὀλιγοψύχους" καὶ ἀνθεκτέον "τῶν ἀσθενῶν" καὶ "πρὸς πάντας" δὲ

⁷⁸Ibid., 754.

μακροθυμητέον καὶ οὐδενὶ "κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ"
ἀποδοτέον. καὶ οὐ χρὴ ἡγεῖσθαι ἐχθρὸν εἶναι τὸν
ἁμαρτάνοντα.⁷⁹

This passage is particularly important because it touches on Origen's ideas about the use of the Power of the Keys. Noting its preventive value, he insists that there is a definite place for excommunication, something he has touched on previously in his seventh homily on Joshua (cf. above); he now states that it must be done rarely, or it may do more harm than good. Passages such as this reflect Origen's strong concern for adequate pastoral care. Poschmann has likewise noted that, "Das Beispiel des Blutschänders ist richtunggebend auch für die Dauer der Buße...sie soll maßvoll sein, und nicht zu groß, damit der Sünder nicht in die übermäßigen Traurigkeit...vom Satan verschlungen werde...[a reference to II Cor. 2:7]."⁸⁰

In his comments on Matt. 26:36 (Comm. Ser. 89), Origen touches briefly on the idea that sinners such as the one in Corinth should be excommunicated from the congregation of believers. He thinks that Jesus chose the Garden of Gethsemane in which to pray, rather than remaining in the Upper Room, because he desired to distance himself from Jewish fables (the Passover). Discussing how Jesus withdrew from the unbelieving world to pray, Origen says that it is better to pray with no one than to pray with evil ones, adding the account of Jesus' ejection of unbelievers from his presence in the house of Jairus. He then says, "Propter hoc enim et in ecclesiis Christi consuetudo tenuit talis, ut qui manifesti sunt in magnis delictis, eiciantur ab oratione communi, ut ne **modicum fermentum** non **ex corde mundo** orantium totam unitatis conspersionem et consensus corrumpat."⁸¹ This particular reference does not even utilise the wording of I Cor. 5:5, but the immediate reference to 5:6 (*modicum*

⁷⁹Origenes Werke X (GCS), p. 496.

⁸⁰Poschmann, *Paenitentia Secunda*, p. 446.

⁸¹Origenes Werke XI (GCS), pp. 204-5.

fermentum) makes it likely that the "ones shown to be in great crimes" is an oblique reference to the Corinthian offender (*sic* Klostermann/Benz).⁸²

In his comments on Matt. 27:3-10 (Comm. Ser. 117) Origen maintains that Judas could not have repented unless Satan, who had entered him earlier, had left him. He then adds:

Si autem opus est et exemplis uti, videamus in epistola ad Corinthios prima eum qui "uxorem habuit patris", nec enim in huiusmodi malo sine magno opere diaboli potuit esse. de quo malo paenituit, sicut scriptura ipsa testatur, et tristatus est "tristitiam secundum deum", tristitiam "quae paenitentiam in salutem stabilem operatur". sed postquam suscepit huiusmodi tristitiam, adposuit iterum se ei diabolus, volens ipsam tristitiam eius supra modum exaggerare, ut iam non esset "secundum deum" ipsa tristitia, sed ut abundantior facta absorberet tristantem supra mensuram et ultra quam tristari debuerat, et sic eum absorberet satanas in "abundantiori tristitia". quod praecognoscens apostolus consilium Corinthiis dat, ut confirment "caritatem in eum", dicens huiusmodi causam: "ut ne" inquit "abundantiori tristitia absorbeatur qui huiusmodi est"...⁸³

This passage is particularly important because of the very clear identification of the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent of II Cor. 2. Thus, according to Origen, there is room for the remission of even such a serious sin as this.

12. Origen has three references to the Corinthian text in his comments on Romans. The first occurs in the preface to his commentary. Origen is referring to Phil. 3:12, in which Paul denies that he has already attained to perfection; the Alexandrian says that there is a [relative] perfection now. It occurs when our bodily passions have been put to death so that we should be like Christ. Origen says to his hypothetical opponent:

⁸²*Ibid.*

⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 247.

Quod si dicat nobis aliquis haec verisimilia non videri, quia non multum temporis inter primam Epistolam fuerit ac secundam, potest et ex eo evidentius noscere, quod in prima Epistola ejectum eum qui fuerat incesti scelere pollutus, et traditum Satanae in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus fieret in die Domini, in secunda jam revocat, et Ecclesiae membris associat. Quod utique non faceret, nisi processu temporis dignos in eo fructus poenitentiae pervidisset, et quod jam caro interitum, quem designaverat Apostolus suscepisset, peccato scilicet et vitiis mortua, ut ita demum viveret Deo. Cum ergo tantum spatii fuerit, quo peccator incestus salutem spiritus laudabili carnis interitu receperit, quomodo non putandum est multo velociore cursu Apostolum quae perfecta sunt assecutum?⁸⁴

This passage once again highlights Origen's identification of the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent in II Cor. 2, but it also shows his flexibility in regard to penance. There is no set time involved for the person involved; it depends upon his progress. Restoration is definitely the goal of the punishment inflicted by Paul, according to the Alexandrian.

In chapter six of the commentary, Origen refers twice to I Cor. 5. In his exposition of Rom. 6:23, he discusses the various meanings of the word death. He mentions physical death and spiritual death (the latter occurring through separation from God due to disobedience); he also refers to Satan as "Death", as well as the place in which the dead are held. After these negative concepts, he discusses that praiseworthy death which dies to sin and is buried with Christ; this death brings improvement to the soul. Origen refers to Deut. 32:39, in which God says, "I kill, and I make alive," and says that we must refer that saying to that type of death which is seemly to God, i.e., a life-conferring death. He cites Ps. 77:34 (LXX), "When he killed them, then they sought him," and says that God thus kills in order that the person die to sin and seek God. He then cites I Cor. 5:5 as another illustration of

⁸⁴PG XIV, 834.

this.⁸⁵ This passage, although it does not mention II Cor. 2, almost certainly reflects Origen's belief that the penitent in that chapter is the same as the one in I Cor. 5; here Origen is talking about life-conferring death, and his belief in the power of penance for even the most serious sins fits perfectly into the context in which he is speaking here.

The other reference to be studied occurs in 6,13 of the commentary, treating Rom. 8:9-10. Origen is discussing life in the Spirit. He refers, in this context, to II Cor. 6:14, in which Paul says that the apostles bear about in their bodies the death of the Lord Jesus, and says that we should likewise be dead in body, not serving sin, but living in the Spirit and serving righteousness. He then refers to Paul's handing over a certain man to the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit might be saved.⁸⁶ Once again, a casual reader might think that this passage shows Origen to expect the sinner's death, but the other references to I Cor. 5 are too numerous and very much opposed to this idea for us to accept it. He seems to envision here a destruction of the *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς* once again—the flesh insistent upon disobedience. Thus, although he does not refer to II Cor. 2 here, it is very likely that he is expressing his belief in the power of penance to restore the serious offender to fellowship within the Church.

13. There is one reference to I Cor. 5 in a *Scholion* on Revelation 8:9. Origen is arguing that "the wrath of God" and "the devil" are one and the same. He compares the passage in II Sam. 24:1 ("the anger of God", RSV) and I Chron. 21:1 ("Satan stood up against Israel", RSV) to prove his point. He then says that sinners are said to be handed over to the wrath of God, which means to the devil, even as Paul surrendered the Corinthian to Satan, that he be taught not to blaspheme (an interesting conflation of the Corinthian text with the similar language of I Tim. 1:20). This is somewhat

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 1067-8.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 1099.

related to Origen's idea of the devil as both enemy and avenger (cf. above) but tells us little else about his understanding of the Corinthian passage.

14. There are several references to the Corinthian text in Origen's writings which occur only in passing and tell us very little indeed:

a. In *Homily 10,1* on Numbers, Origen is treating Num. 18:1ff and discussing the presence of evil among the people of God. He says that it is still a problem, mentioning the salutation of I Corinthians, in which the members of the church there are "called to be saints", and then contrasting this with the incestuous behaviour of one of their number.⁸⁷

b. In *Homily 6,9* on Luke, Origen discusses the superiority of Jesus to John the Baptist. He cites Ps. 19:5 to prove that the glory of Jesus shines throughout the world and then quotes I Cor. 5:4 ("when you are assembled, and my spirit [is present] with the power of the Lord Jesus") to prove the omnipresence of Jesus.⁸⁸

c. In *De Principiis* 3, 1, 21 Origen is treating the interpretation of Rom. 9:18-21, in which Paul says that God makes vessels to be either vile or noble. He strongly objects to the deterministic view that denies the freedom of the human will, preferring to construe the making of the vessel vile or noble on the basis of "anterior merits". He notes that Paul blamed the Corinthians for their debauchery and immodesty.⁸⁹ Origen develops this idea more thoroughly in a surviving fragment from his homilies on Exodus, surveyed earlier in this chapter, saying that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart was his own fault and not God's.⁹⁰ Thus, in *De Principiis* as well as in the fragment from Exodus, Origen uses the Corinthian text to protest a determinism which denies all human freedom.

⁸⁷*Homélie sur le Nombres*, pp. 190-1.

⁸⁸*Homélie sur S. Luc*, pp. 148-51.

⁸⁹*Traité des Principes*, pp. 170-1.

⁹⁰*Philocalie 21-27: Sur le Libre Arbitre*, pp. 294-8.

There is a surviving fragment of a commentary on Ps. 8:3 (LXX; v. 2 in modern Bibles) which is of dubious authenticity. The writer, referring to "the enemy and the avenger" (RSV), says that Satan, as an enemy, urges us to sin, but as an avenger, he buffets (κολάζει) the one given to him. Likewise, he disciplined (ἐπαίδευσεν) Hymenaeus and Alexander when they committed blasphemy. This text may be of dubious authorship, but as has been seen, it captures Origen's thinking exactly. On the basis of content alone, there is a strong argument in favour of this passage's authenticity.⁹¹

There is another passage of dubious authorship which utilises the Corinthian text in a fragment from Prov. 5:14. Pitra notes that the codices differ, one ascribing it to Gennadius, another to Origen. The writer is calling for the Church to be pure and says that the presence of the sinner in the midst of the Corinthian congregation was not a small matter, but was evil in every way.⁹²

C. THE REMAINDER OF I CORINTHIANS 5

It now remains to look at other references to I Cor. 5 in Origen's output to see if any further light is shed on his understanding of vv. 3-5. The key verses are 7a, 9, 11, and 13. His other references to I Tim. 1:20 will also be examined, although some of them have already been included in the body of this chapter, since Origen occasionally quotes it along with I Cor. 5:5, noting their similarity of language. As previously, my method will be to look at Origen's surviving *Catena*e on I Corinthians, then to move to his commentaries and homilies on other books of the Bible which use the Corinthian text, then to his treatises, and finally to his other references to I Tim. 1:20.

In the *Catena*e on I Corinthians 5, Origen says that the one who has stripped off the old man with its works (Col. 3:9) is the one who has prepared the feast of

⁹¹*Analecta Sacra* III, p. 459.

⁹²*Ibid.*, p. 525.

(true) unleavened bread. Christ himself is the new leaven; with him, we do not eat the old leaven of malice and wickedness. Origen goes on to describe the Jewish care to remove leaven from their midst when the passover and the feast of unleavened bread are nearing; even so, he says, should we do the same thing in our lives (the Greek is σό, showing that Origen envisions a personal, individual search here). He then continues in characteristic fashion to show that the sacrifice of Christ has fulfilled the typology of the Mosaic law. In his comments on vv. 9-11, Origen says that Paul viewed πόρνοι in the Church as worse than those without, since the latter are not the temple of God. He cites Paul's list of sins in I Cor. 5 and says that these are both in the world and in the Church. In his comments on 5:13 he takes both the approaches we have seen earlier, saying that serious offenders must be cast out, but also that each of us must examine our lives to see if any evil there needs to be cast out.⁹³

In *Homily 10,3* on Genesis (24:15ff.), Origen touches on Isa. 1:13-14, in which Judah is rebuked for its feasts, festivals at the new moon, etc. The Alexandrian then says that Christians partake of Christ every day, quoting I Cor. 5:7b to support this.⁹⁴ In Hom 14,1 Origen mentions I Cor. 5:7b *en passant* in relation to the story of Abraham's offering up of Isaac (Gen. 22:16-17).⁹⁵

In *Homily 7,4* on Exodus, Origen in his comments on Ex. 16:1-3 notes that Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the "second month". He then compares this with Num. 9:9-11, in which an alternate passover is prescribed for those who were unclean at the usual time; the alternate one is set for the "second month". Origen says that the second passover actually refers to the coming of Christ, and that the manna, which is bread from Heaven, had not fallen at the first passover; instead, since

⁹³Jenkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 365-7.

⁹⁴*Origenes Werke VI (GCS)*, p. 97.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 122.

Christ is the bread from Heaven, we can say that the manna has fallen only on Christians, who keep the second passover. He cites I Cor. 5:7b in this context.⁹⁶

We will now examine all the relevant passages from Origen's homilies on Leviticus. In *Homily 9,7* Origen treats the passage concerning the "leprous house" (Lev. 14:33-53) and cites I Cor. 5:6-7 to show that we are to cleanse ourselves of the leprosy of sin, since we are the Lord's house.⁹⁷ In *Homily 4,8* Origen is treating Lev. 6:14-18 (the cereal offering). He cites I Cor. 5:7b, saying that Christ is the fulfilment of the sacrifice, which is a type of him.⁹⁸ In *Homily 10,2* (treating Lev. 16:21, 22, and 24), Origen cites I Cor. 5:7b to show that Christ has fulfilled the typology of the Day of Atonement.⁹⁹ In *Homily 3,3* (treating Lev. 5:2-3), Origen quotes I Cor. 5:9-11, saying that the "carrion" which Christians must not touch is the association with professing Christians who are living in sin.¹⁰⁰ Besides its interest in revealing the way Origen's mind works, this reference reinforces Origen's stance on excommunication; there is to be a separation between offenders and the Christian community, although here he seems to imply that the persons involved are impenitent. In *Homily 5,10*, Origen cites I Cor. 5:11 in his treatment of Lev. 7:11; he says that anyone mixing with professing Christians living in sin has also become unclean; we are polluted if we violate Paul's command.¹⁰¹ In *Homily 7,5* Origen discusses the ritual cleanliness prescribed for the priests (Lev. 10:8-11) and treats it as a type of the separation of the Church from sin. In this context he cites I Cor. 5:11, saying that to mix with Christians guilty of sin is like violating the commandment to Aaron and his sons.¹⁰²

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 209.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 432.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 327.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 443.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, p. 304.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, p. 353.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, p. 386.

In *Homily 5,1* on Numbers, Origen states that Moses understood the spiritual significance of all the Old Testament symbolism; he cites I Cor. 5:7-8 as fulfilment of Jewish types.¹⁰³ In *Homily 11,1* Origen is treating Num. 18:8ff., in which the priests receive and eat the offerings of first fruits. He cites Heb. 10:1, in which the law is said to have a shadow of the good things to come. As an example of this, he says that when we read of the sheep for sacrificing, we should understand that it is a type of Christ. He then cites I Cor. 5:7b.¹⁰⁴ In *Homily 23, 6* Origen is discussing the feast of unleavened bread, and he mentions that the sheep which was sacrificed is a type of Christ, again citing I Cor. 5:7.¹⁰⁵

In his homilies on Joshua, Origen refers to I Cor. 5:7b in *Homily 2,1*. He is contrasting the earthly and heavenly Jerusalems; Moses is dead, but Jesus is alive after death (thus, Joshua, living after Moses, is a type of Jesus, who lives even after death). Origen then quotes the Corinthian passage.¹⁰⁶ In *Homily 7,6* there is also a reference to I Cor. 5:13 ("auferte malum de vobis ipsis") which is cited with I Cor. 5:5 (cf. above) in Origen's insistence that the priests be willing to exercise their proper function of excommunication when necessary. The context here demands an ecclesial setting; Origen is not concerned here with the personal, spiritualised cleansing that each Christian is to do, but rather with the duties of the ecclesiastical leaders in imposing excommunication.¹⁰⁷ In *Homily 6,1* Origen discusses the passover which Israel celebrated at Gilgal (Jos. 5:12ff.) and the ritual cleanness required for it. He cites I Cor. 5:7-8 as a fulfilment of the Old Testament types.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ *Origenes Werke VII (GCS)*, p. 26.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

There is one reference to I Cor. 5:7b in *Homily 12,13* on Jeremiah. Origen states that the Jews eat the passover incorrectly, since Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed for us.¹⁰⁹

In the commentaries on Matthew, Origen has various references to the Corinthian verses under examination. In Tom. XII,5, he is treating Matt. 16:5-12, in which Jesus warns his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Origen says that Jesus has made them a new lump of dough (I Cor. 5:7), but no further comments on this verse are added.¹¹⁰ In Tom. XIII,30, Origen is examining Matt. 18:15-18, concerning the necessity of the reproof of Christians by other Christians. Origen discusses the grades of sin (some worse than others). He cites I Cor. 5:11 and then states his belief that any professing Christian who is named as an idolater or fornicator or greedy person is not really a brother at all.¹¹¹ In his comments on Matt. 23:1-12 (comm. ser. 10), concerning the Jewish leaders who say one thing and do another, Origen says that the Jews do not really sacrifice the passover lamb, because Christ is now the lamb; he cites I Cor. 5:7b in support, adding a reference to 5:8 to show the difference between true eating of unleavened bread by Christians and the carnal eating by the Jews.¹¹² He repeats v. 8 in the same context shortly afterwards, in his further treatment of the same passage.¹¹³ In treating Matt. 26:17-19, he cites I Cor. 5:7-8 *en passant* in contrasting the Jewish dispensation with the Christian era.¹¹⁴ The contrast between the Jewish and Christian religions shows up again in Origen's treatment of Matt. 26:2¹¹⁵(comm. ser. 75) and 26:3-5,¹¹⁶ (comm.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, III, p. 99.

¹¹⁰*Origenes Werke X (GCS)*, p. 75.

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 263.

¹¹²*Origenes Werke XI (GCS)*, pp. 19-20.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 189.

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 175.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 178.

ser. 76) both times utilising I Cor. 5:7b and citing 5:8 in the latter reference. A surviving *catena* also contains a reference to both I Cor. 5:11 and 5:13; Origen, treating Matt. 13:30 (the parable of the tares and the wheat) says that if anyone despises the words of Paul (in the verses just mentioned), the day of harvest will reveal the tares among the wheat.¹¹⁷

There is one reference to I Cor. 5:7 in Origen's homilies on Luke. In *Homily* 28 he is treating Lk. 3, containing the genealogy of Jesus, and he discusses the Genesis account of Egypt's having no bread, except for the foresight of Joseph. He says that now Jesus garners up bread for us in the Word of God, and that we are to make our bread from that, and not from "old leaven" (I Cor. 5:7).¹¹⁸

Origen's commentary on John has several references to I Cor. 5:7, all in *Homily* 10, which treats John 2. Here he constantly uses the Corinthian text to show that the sacrifice of Christ has replaced the Jewish worship.¹¹⁹ In addition he has one reference to I Cor. 5:7-8 in *Homily* 28, treating John 11:55-56; referring to those who were seeking Jesus in the temple, Origen states that it is the spiritual ones, living according to the new, unleavened bread, who are the ones who truly do that.¹²⁰

In Origen's commentary on Romans, there is a reference to I Cor. 5:7. Origen is discussing how the law had a shadow of the good things to come; as the fulfilment of that, he cites the Corinthian passage.¹²¹ This is, of course, similar to the remarks he has made concerning this in his eleventh homily on Numbers (cf. above).

In *Contra Celsum* VIII:22, Origen refers to I Cor. 5:7 when he says that, once we understand that Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed for us, we ought to keep

¹¹⁷*Origenes Werke* XII (GCS), pp. 133-4.

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, IX, p. 166.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, IV, pp. 185 (3 references), 186 (3 references), and 189 (2 references).

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 242.

¹²¹*PG* XIV, 1020.

the feast by eating the flesh of the Logos; our minds will then be in spiritual realms, and we will be living in the day of Pentecost.¹²²

These references to the remainder of I Cor. 5 do not contribute greatly to our understanding of Origen's exegesis of that chapter. His references to the possibility of shunning are interesting, and it is obvious that he is in favour of this; it ties in with Rahner's observation quoted earlier in this chapter, that a serious offender seems to have been excluded not only from the Eucharist, but also from all other religious worship.¹²³ If Origen is in favour of shunning, as seems to be the case, he gives us no indication of how much this was imposed in the Church of his day.

D. I TIMOTHY 1:20

There are two remaining references to I Tim. 1:20 which must be examined. One occurs in a *catena* on Lamentations 4:1. Origen, citing I Timothy, says that the Jews were taken to Babylon to learn not to blaspheme, and to learn godliness. Thus we once again see Origen's emphasis on the remedial nature of the punishment. The other reference occurs in *Homily 19,3* on Numbers. *Hom. 19,4*, which uses the Corinthian text, has already been examined (cf. above). The passage Origen is treating is the prophecy of Balaam (Num. 24:20ff.), and he says:

Qui enim blasphemant in ecclesia positi, traduntur Satanae, sicut Phygelus et Hermogenes (II Tim. 1:15), de quibus Paulus dicit: "quos tradidi" inquit "Satanae, ut discant non blasphemare". Propterea ergo Assyriis traditur, qui declinaverit in haeticam blasphemiam, quia Assyrii interpretantur dirigentes; et ob hoc traduntur his, qui traduntur, non ut pereant, neque ut penitus intereant, sed ut dirigantur et corrigantur et, sicut ipse Paulus dicit: "ut discant non blasphemare".¹²⁴

¹²²*Contra Celsum* (ed. Chadwick), p. 468.

¹²³Rahner, *op. cit.*, II, p. 270.

¹²⁴*Origenes Werke VII (GCS)*, pp. 182-3.

Here Origen once more notes the remedial nature of the punishment; he again confuses Phygelus and Hermogenes (II Tim. 1:15) with Hymenaeus and Alexander (I Tim. 1:20), but the reference to the latter text is clear. The contrast with Tertullian is glaring; the North African writer thinks that when Paul surrendered the offender for the destruction of the flesh, there was at least a possibility that the man would die. Here Origen says that Paul did not desire the ones surrendered to Satan to die, but to be set right and corrected. This passage captures as well as any the entirely different approaches and conclusions the two men derive from their study of I Cor. 5:5 and I Tim. 1:20.

This concludes our survey of Origen's citations of Scripture citing I Cor. 5:3-5 and the similar language in I Tim. 1:20.

E. CONCLUSIONS

The works of Origen have occupied considerable space in this thesis; one reason for this is his importance for the future understanding of this text in the Church which developed after his time. Origen is the genuine pacesetter for what became the traditional way of exegeting I Corinthians 5. Another reason for the space devoted to Origen is the variety which characterises his thinking; one can never be sure what he is going to say, or how he is going to use a text, until the passage has been thoroughly examined. After this overview of the material pertaining to I Cor. 5:3-5, it is now time to summarise what this study reveals.

1. Time and again Origen stresses that, whatever else is implied in the Corinthian passage, it means that a serious offender must be expelled from the congregation. If Rahner is correct, this means exclusion from *all* Christian worship. This is necessary both for his sake and the sake of the faithful congregation, who must be kept in spiritual health under no danger from the offender's spiritual contagion.

2. Equally clear is Origen's idea that the punishment, although it may seem punitive, is basically remedial and has as its aim the full restoration of the offender to

the congregation, although, as Poschmann notes, those who had been guilty of heinous sins while in positions of ecclesiastical leadership were not allowed to hold office in the Church after they had undergone penance for a serious offence.¹²⁵ This leads us to question whether Origen really believes in a full restoration; his writings assert that such a restoration is assured, but this stance calls for further study. It may reveal an inconsistency in the great Alexandrian's thinking. Certainly he views restoration as involving a return to the sacraments and worship of the Church; but he does debar priests who have sinned grievously from returning to their office.

3. Origen interprets the passage both in an ecclesiastical setting and in an inward, spiritual fashion; neither is excluded. This is not too surprising, perhaps, given Origen's idea of the multiple senses of Scripture. However, it may also tie in with Origen's ideas on hierarchies and parallel orders in the seen and unseen worlds. This has been noticed in connection with Origen's remarks about the Corinthian passage in *De oratione*, and this sense of corresponding orders may contribute to his multiple understanding of Scripture.

4. Origen's understands the "flesh" which must be destroyed as the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός. As has been seen, he interprets σάρξ in accord with Paul's usage of it in Rom. 7 and 8, in which the "flesh" is seen as the principle opposed to "spirit" or "the Spirit". Consequently, he has no use for Tertullian's hint that actual physical death may be part of the *interitum carnis*.

5. Origen has been noted for his emphasis on Christians becoming πνευματικοί; he is following on Clement's thinking here, and much of his writing speaks of the importance of the spiritual leader in the Church. Questions have been asked many times as to whether this emphasis of Origen's in reality leads to the destruction of the priestly office, since, supposedly, any spiritual person can bind and loose. Therefore it comes as something of a shock to see that, in his exegesis of the

¹²⁵Poschmann, *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick*, pp. 68-9.

Corinthian passage, Origen comes down solidly on the side of the clergy. Not one of the references cited above can be shown to apply to the πνευματικοὶ as opposed to the clergy, although Poschmann notes that in his Commentary on Matthew XII,11-14, Origen does say that non-priests may loose others from sins if they have the appropriate qualifications.¹²⁶ He thinks that we must understand two functions for the priest in the penitential procedure, if we are to understand Origen. On the one hand, there is the work of the πνευματικός, who may or may not be a bishop; it is he who will provide the spiritual guidance to set an offender free from sin. On the other hand, there is the ecclesiastical function of forgiveness, which can be meted out only by the bishop.¹²⁷ This argument may not answer fully all the questions connected with Origen's belief in this matter, but it is quite possibly correct, given Origen's idea of what Rahner calls "couches" (layers) in Origen's theology;¹²⁸ this touches on his idea of spiritual hierarchies, but also on the idea of the various grades of perfection (angels, the spirits of the departed, πνευματικοί, etc.). The other option would be to say that when speaking of the πνευματικοί's power to loose, he is being theoretical, whereas at the ecclesiastical level he comes down in favour of the existing system. If this were the case, we would think that Origen might reveal some inner tension about this conflict, but he does not do this. Of course, Origen would prefer that the bishops and other church leaders be spiritual; but he has no quibble with the existing framework of the penitential system, and he speaks as a dutiful son of the Church. Rahner says, "Origène veut être homme d'Église, et rien de plus. La doctrine ecclésiastique et les règles de l'Évangile sont pour lui, en tout, norme intangible."¹²⁹ This is certainly true in respect to his thinking regarding the penitential system. Von Campenhausen has noted that Origen never tries to line up a hierarchy of πνευματικοὶ to parallel his idea

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 71-2.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹²⁸Rahner, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 49-50.

¹²⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 48-9.

of the hierarchies of angels, bishops, etc., nor does he try to draw "any sort of legal conclusions from such situations. Apart from the visible hierarchy of the bishops the only hierarchy he knows is the invisible one of ministering spirits...In such contexts Origen never thinks in terms of canonistic consequences and possibilities."¹³⁰ He also notes, "In all this Origen's thinking is entirely that of a churchman and a 'catholic'. To question the existing penitential system simply never occurs to him."¹³¹ However, we have already seen that Origen is aware of problems among the clergy and does not hesitate to reprove them. He also differentiates between the ideal and the norm, in the light of his Platonic philosophy. Thus he does not attribute absolute power to a bad bishop. Bigg notes, "His doctrine of clerical authority is not unlike that of Wiclif. The power to bind and loose depends upon the spiritual worthiness of him who wields it."¹³² Von Campenhausen states:

There is both the possibility and the fact of unjust judgment, of excommunication which, though outwardly valid and given in proper form, is in fact a miscarriage of justice. What are we to say about the inner meaning and religious effect of such an act? For Origen as for others, the Church is the people of God's devout elect, the fellowship of salvation which possesses within itself the gifts of God's grace; hence expulsion from the Church is not merely a disgrace but a serious misfortune for the person affected, and an ominous threat to his salvation. But this whole approach is valid only so long as the sentence of excommunication is justly imposed. In the case of an unjust sentence these considerations have no further force, and the position is quite the reverse. If a bishop, from personal dislike or selfish motives, or it may be, simply from error and human weakness, turns an innocent Christian out of the Church, such a decision is null and void in the eyes of God and can do no harm to the person on whom it is passed. This view is explicitly

¹³⁰von Campenhausen, *EAASP*, p. 256.

¹³¹*Ibid.*, p. 257.

¹³²Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 215.

emphasised in opposition to a radical hierarchical theory. Those who claim episcopal jurisdiction, it is asserted, appeal in their proceedings to the promise of the keys to Peter, and explain "that they have received the keys of the kingdom of heaven from the Saviour, and that for this reason everything which is bound, that is condemned, by them is also bound in heaven, and everything which is loosed, that is, forgive, by them is also loosed in heaven". This, Origen goes on, is correct only in so far as the bishop himself is like Peter in his life, and can in fact pass judgment with the same degree of authority. But if he himself is 'entangled in the snares of his own sin', then he binds and looses "to no effect". It would be a risible delusion to assume that anyone could exclude his fellow-men from salvation simply "because he enjoyed the title of bishop".¹³³

Von Campenhausen also notes that the reverse is true; a sinner who is wrongly released from penance by an unworthy bishop is not really released in the eyes of God.¹³⁴ Daniélou states, "If [Origen] fully admits that this power [to remit sins] is restricted to the priesthood, he nevertheless will not allow that it is exercised validly when the priest is unworthy."¹³⁵

The lengthy citation from von Campenhausen is important because it shows a similarity between Tertullian and Origen, so vastly different from each other in their application of the Corinthian passage to the Church of their day. They both have to deal with the problem of unworthy bishops, and they both say that an unworthy bishop does not have the power he professes, but binds and looses in vain, in the sight of God. Likewise, in their emphasis on spiritual men being the holders of power, the two theologians strike a similar note. By the same token, neither is willing to follow their thinking to logical conclusions, i.e., that a spiritual man, bishop or not, should have more power to bind and loose than an unspiritual bishop. Tertullian, incensed against a certain bishop as he was (*De pudicitia*), does not abandon the idea of a bishop;

¹³³*Ibid.*, p. 259.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 259-60.

¹³⁵Daniélou, *Origen*, p. 71.

Origen, convinced of the need for priests to be spiritual men, does not completely rule out the episcopal power because a bishop falls below Origen's spiritual standard. Given these similarities, the vast difference between their respective understandings of the Corinthian text is even more glaring.

The fact that Origen's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 is solidly ecclesiastical and says that penance and restoration are the province of the clergy, with no mention of any place of the πνευματικοί mentioned elsewhere, vividly illustrates the remark of B.J. Kidd already cited on p. 5 of this chapter. If the Corinthian passage and its exegesis were taken in isolation, readers would never know of Origen's idea broached in his commentary on Matthew (Tom. XII, 11-14). The same can be said about another item in his use of I Cor. 5. He always refers to penance and reconciliation being the province of the clergy, but says nothing about its being the particular duty of the bishop, although we know from an abundance of other passages from Origen's writings that he believes this to be the case (e.g., in *Homilies 12* and *14* on Leviticus; and in the first homily on Psalm 37, LXX¹³⁶). The necessity of a careful and thorough study of Origen's works is demonstrated again; taken in isolation, his exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 would not yield the complete picture of his ideas on penance, even though he takes it as the model Scriptural passage for the penitential system and what happens through its use.

The question must be asked, whether Origen's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 reveals him to think that the clergy have inherited the fulness of apostolic power. We have already seen in his treatment of 5:3-4 that he sees a definite similarity and correspondence between Paul's powers and those operating within the church of

¹³⁶Rahner, *op. cit.*, II, p. 259, gives the references. The problems concerning the origin of the episcopacy in Alexandria should be remembered; Kidd (I, p. 379ff.) discusses the possibility of something unusual in the way Alexandrians elected their bishops (Jerome's *Epistle CXLVI* is important here). We should also ask whether Origen's treatment at the hands of his own bishop, Demetrius (banning and deposition in 231) may not have coloured his understanding of the episcopate and thus affected his comments in the *Homilies*, which date from his Caesarean period.

Origen's day. However, the question is complicated by the fact that Origen tends to view v. 5 strictly within the context of the penitential procedure of his day, and he never hints at anything more than excommunication and ἐξομολόγησις happening to the offender. Does Origen view excommunication as being the sum total of what Paul did to the offender? He does not say so expressly, but his spiritualising tendency might well lead him in such a direction. If this is the case, then the reply to the question would be affirmative, but with an awareness that Origen viewed excommunication as the total punishment. However, if there were more to the punishment than excommunication and the resulting official penance, then Origen's exegesis of this passage does not give us further light on the question.

Before addressing Origen's ideas on penance, it should be noted that his exegesis of I Cor. 5 says almost nothing about the part of the congregation in the punishment or restoration of the offender. In his other writings, he notes the importance of the prayers of the congregation for the penitents (*Hom.* 4,8 on Exodus), and we have already noted the importance in his writings of the πνευματικοί, and this is nowhere more pronounced than in his ideas on penance; the spiritual men are to assist the fallen back into the faith. This reveals the importance of (at least) the spiritual members of the congregation, and the prayers of the congregation presumably involve others who have not yet become πνευματικοί. Rahner thinks that there is a certain "division of labour"; he says,

...il n'y a pas de raison de supposer que cette "prière" des évêques, qui est dite opérer la rémission des péchés, soit de nature essentiellement différente de celle des autres saints. Or, ceci ne veut pas dire, même abstraction faite de leur pouvoir de lier et de délier en prononçant et en levant l'excommunication, que le pouvoir de rémission des évêques coïncide adéquatement avec celui des autres pneumatiques. En effet, dans le cas de la "correctio" il faut déjà distinguer entre la remontrance particulière et l'admonestation

ecclésiastique, cette dernière ne convenant qu'au clergé.¹³⁷

Origen's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 does not tell us more than this; his ideas of the punishment and restoration are weighted heavily toward the clergy.

Origen's passionate convictions concerning the necessity of penance are clear in his exegesis of the Corinthian passage. His whole concept of penance ties in with his doctrine of future restoration. He contrasts the baptism of the Spirit (a "baptism of fire") with baptism in water. In this light, Poschmann remarks

Admittedly, the Alexandrian's mention of the "baptism of fire" has its setting in his restoration doctrine, and he is thinking in the first place of the purification even from the gravest sins that is still possible in the hereafter. However, this purification can be anticipated already in this life by penance: "The more he [the sinner] is burnt in the fire of tribulation, the more he finds mercy."¹³⁸

Given this eschatological context, the question should be asked whether Origen's universalism contributes to his absolute assurance that penance is medicinal and restorative. Although this idea does not show up in his comments on I Corinthians, his whole concept of penance as an eschatological ἀποβῶν probably yields an affirmative answer. The *De principiis*, in which Origen's universalism is most clearly expressed, is a comparatively early work, and we should ask whether Origen in later years modified his thinking at this point. Westcott thinks it most probable that he did not,¹³⁹ and if he is correct, we see Origen's penitential doctrine following in the steps of that of Clement; both are agreed that purification is necessary and may be begun in this life. Koch states:

Für Origenes ist Gott wirklich ein strafender Richter—
hierin stimmt er mit dem Alten Testament gegen die

¹³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 284.

¹³⁸Poschmann, *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick*, p. 66.

¹³⁹"Origenes", *Dictionary of Christian Biography* IV, p. 119.

Gnostiker überein. Aber die Strafe und das Urteil haben eine andere Bedeutung erhalten. In erster Linie ist darauf aufmerksam zu machen, dass ihm eine jede Form der Vergeltung fern liegt. Wenn Gott Strafe erteilt, gilt nicht das Prinzip: "Auge um Auge und Zahn um Zahn", Gott verlangt keine Satisfaktion für jede begangene Sünde. Die Strafe durch "Feuer und im Gefängnis" ist nicht als ἀντιμισθία τῆς πλάνης zu betrachten. Die Gnostiker verstehen die Gerechtigkeit Gottes falsch, wenn sie dieselbe als eine Vergeltung für Böses mit Bösem und Gutes mit Gutem nach Verdienst betrachten, sie erfassen nicht, dass seine Strenge einen heilenden Zweck hat. Dies hängt damit zusammen, dass die Strafe nicht in der Heiligkeit Gottes, sondern in seiner Güte ihren Ursprung hat: "Wen der Herr liebt, züchtigt er".¹⁴⁰

The importance of this passage for understanding Origen's exegesis of I Cor. 5:5 is plain; his concept of the character of God and his eschatological ideas shape his understanding of penance as restorative and remedial. Koch also notes that, "So viel also steht fest für Origenes: nicht bestraft zu werden, ist der höchste Ausdruck des 'Zornes Gottes', seiner 'Verwerfung' des Geschöpfes, wogegen die Strafe eine Wohltat ist."¹⁴¹ It is in this context that Origen's "medicinal" concept of penance is rightly anchored. The worse the sin, the sharper becomes the punishment; God makes use of "*poenales curae*", and if the soul has completely lost its health, the *ignis supplicium* must be employed.¹⁴² When evil has been annihilated through penance, then the punishment can cease. It both restores a fallen Christian and serves as a warning to another not to be entangled in such sin.¹⁴³ Koch states:

Kurz: durch die Strafe geht für die Seelen der einzige Weg fort von der Sünde zu ihrem göttlichen Ursprung zurück. Diese Theorie ist es, welche zum ganzen theologischen System Origenes', von der Schöpfung der sichtbaren Welt an bis zu ihrem Untergang und der

¹⁴⁰Koch, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 135 (citing Origen's *Homily 6, 2*, on Jeremiah).

¹⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 136 (*De Principiis* 2,10,6).

¹⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 137.

Like Clement, Origen agrees that there is only one major penance for Christians who have fallen into serious sin, in contrast to the sins of common occurrence, which may always be atoned for by penance (Hom. 15,2 on Leviticus).¹⁴⁵ He does not attempt to square this with his universalistic theory; it is tempting to think that he might follow Tertullian's way of thinking in saying that, while there are sins the Church may not forgive, it is possible that God may, but this is beyond the scope of the Alexandrian's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5.

In summary, Origen believes in a restoration for a Christian who has fallen into even reprehensible sin. The forgiveness takes place in the context of the penitential procedure of the Church, and (in his exegesis of the Corinthian passage, at least) is administered by the clergy, as is the preceding excommunication, which is absolutely necessary. When Paul surrendered the offender to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, it was so that his spirit might be saved; what had to be destroyed was the *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός*. The spirit which was to be saved was the man's spirit, and the restoration was to take place in this life, as shown by II Cor. 2:5.

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹⁴⁵Poschmann, *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick*, p. 67.

Chapter 3

THE CAPPADOCIANS

The previous chapter of this thesis noted the great frequency of I Cor. 5:3-5 in the writings of Origen. The situation is completely different when we come to the works of the three great Cappadocian fathers of the fourth century. Their references to the Corinthian passage are sparse in comparison with Origen, and the secondary literature treating their exegetical techniques is equally meagre. The Cappadocians are remembered more as theologians than as commentators on the Scriptures, and both their own work and the secondary material reflect this; neither Basil nor Gregory of Nazianzus left any commentaries on the books of the Bible. Yet this does not mean that their works are not filled with Scriptural citations and allusions; a casual glance at the collections of their writings will reveal a constant reference to the Bible by these theologians, and, while systematic exposition of I Cor. 5:3-5 such as was found in the writings of Origen may be lacking in the Cappadocians, their references to the Corinthian passage are nonetheless sufficient to show how they understood that text. I will be studying these writers in the order in which they are usually listed, and, as in previous chapters of this thesis, will be breaking I Cor. 5 into component parts, *viz.* vv. 1-2, vv. 3-5, and finally the remaining portions of the chapter, in order to see if further insights are given into the Cappadocian exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5.

I. BASIL THE GREAT

With Basil we come to the third way of interpreting I Cor. 5:3-5. In the later writings of Tertullian, the view is taken that the Corinthian passage, applied to congregational life, signifies that serious sins in the life of the baptised believer can never be forgiven. In the writings of Origen, just the opposite view is taken; even serious sin can be forgiven once, since the offender of I Cor. 5:3-5 is obviously the same as the offender mentioned by Paul in II Cor. 2:5ff. Origen also interprets the

verse in an individual, personalised sense; each of us is to cleanse himself or herself from sin. However, the Christian there is viewed as a member of a congregation of Christians. Basil, as will be seen, is in agreement with Origen as to the possibility of forgiveness for serious sin, but where he strikes a new note is in placing the Corinthian text, not in a congregational setting, but in a monastic one. According to this approach, I Cor. 5:3-5 is applied not so much to the rank-and-file Christian in the local congregation as to the one who has expressed a desire to live a life of absolute commitment but has now encountered difficulty. Thus, any reference by Basil to I Cor. 5 must be placed in its proper context: is he speaking to Christians at the congregational level, or is he speaking to monks? Accordingly, I will group Basil's references to the monastic milieu separately, examining them after observing his citations of the Corinthian text in a non-monastic context.

A. VERSES 1-2

1. The *Moralia* (τὰ ἠθικά), a collection of moral regulations, is Basil's first ascetic work.¹ In spite of its austerity, it is addressed to all Christians. Chapter one of Rule 52 asks whether it is not necessary to grieve and mourn over sinners (the context implies sinning Christians).² He responds with three Scriptural citations: Lk. 19:41-2 (Jesus weeping over Jerusalem), I Cor. 5:2 (Paul's rebuke of the Corinthians for not mourning over and excommunicating the offender from their midst), and II Cor. 12:21 (Paul's fear that God will humiliate him when he next comes to Corinth, and that he will have to mourn greatly over sinners). From this combination of passages we can see that Basil takes a serious view of sin in the life of the Christian community.

2. *De iudicio Dei* serves as a preface to the *Moralia*. In chapter 7, Basil is discussing II Cor. 10:3-5, in which Paul speaks of warring with spiritual weapons,

¹Quasten, III, p. 211.

²PG XXXI, 775-8.

bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Basil has an extensive reference to I Cor. 5:3-5 which will be discussed below. He notes that Paul accused the congregation of guilt by their refusal to excommunicate the offender; he then cites I Cor. 4:21 (Ἐν ῥάβδῳ ἔλθω πρὸς ὑμᾶς;) and then I Cor. 5:2 (Καὶ ὑμεῖς πεφυσιωμένοι ἐστέ, καὶ οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἐπενθήσατε, ἵνα ἐξαρθῇ ἐκ μέσου ὁ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο πράξας). The context shows that Basil views their complacency as one of the "ideas" which had to be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Even in this brief passage, we see Basil's belief that excommunication is necessary; that will be reinforced when we examine the earlier portion of this particular passage under the heading of vv. 3-5.

3. There is also a reference to I Cor. 5:2 in the Commentary (*Enarratio*) on Isaiah included with the Basilian works, although its authenticity has been denied.³ Other writers⁴ have argued for its genuineness. The *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* and *Biblia Patristica* list it among the *Dubia*, not among the *Spuria*, so I will examine the reference to I Cor. 5:2 (and to 5:6) which occurs in its treatment of Isa. 1:25 (Καὶ ἐπάξω τὴν χεῖρα μου ἐπὶ σέ εἰς καθαρὸν.) Commenting on this text, the writer notes that the punishment is for the purpose of purification. He says, Κρίσιν ποιήσω...πυρώσω. Καὶ τί; Ἵνα καθαρὸν ἀποδείξω. Οὕτω θυμοῦται ὁ θεός, ἵνα εὐεργετήσῃ τοὺς ἁμαρτωλοὺς. Οὐ γὰρ εἰς ἀφανισμόν κολάζει· ἀλλὰ παιδεύει εἰς ἐπανόρθωσιν. He goes on to cite Mal. 3:3 ("He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver...") and then quotes I Cor. 5:6, saying, Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ οἱ περὶ τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν τύποι τοὺς ἐν ἀπηγορευμένοις παραπτώμασιν εὐρεθέντας χωρίζουσι τοῦ λοιποῦ σώματος, ἵνα μὴ μικρὰ ζύμη ὅλον τὸ φύραμα δολώσῃ. Ὡστε κατὰ ἀγαθὸν θεὸν ἐστὶ τὸ ἀφελεῖν ἀνόμους ἀπὸ λαοῦ. Those who are currently separated as evildoers should bear their punishment patiently, for it is a great

³e.g., by Garnier (reprinted by Migne: *PG* XXX, 117) and Quasten, III, p. 219.

⁴e.g., Wittig, Jülicher, and Humbertclaude.

evil when sinners are not separated from the society of the holy members of Christ, as Paul demonstrated when he rebuked the Corinthians, saying that they had neither repented nor removed from their midst the one who had done the evil deed.⁵

The argument of the passage is quite clear; the writer clearly believes that separation of sinners from the Christian congregation is absolutely necessary. The punishment, although described only as separation from the community, is evidently unpleasant, but has purification as its aim. This thinking is almost certainly influenced by Origen; the same emphases on penance as the way to purification and on the necessity of excommunication are seen repeatedly in his writings. Solely on the basis of content, there is nothing in this passage (or the other references to the commentary examined in this work) to argue against Basilian authorship.

Basil's other references to vv. 1-2 occur in his monastic works, which I will now examine.

4. In Question 47 of the *Regulae Brevius Tractatae*, the inquirer is asking if one should be silent (in the sense of reproof) toward those who are sinning. In his response, Basil cites I Cor. 5:2, noting that Paul reproofed the Corinthians for their sin; earlier he has quoted Matt. 18:15-17 ("If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault...").⁶

5. Question 56 of the same work addresses the problem of pride. Basil, in his response, notes Paul's rebuke of the Corinthians in I Cor. 5:2, saying that they were puffed up.⁷ He makes no further comment here, but moves on to other verses in his definition of the faults which the Scriptures condemn.

6. Question 57 of the same work asks what must be done with a brother who continues in evil behaviour, and whether it is expedient that he be sent away from the

⁵PG XXX, 217-20.

⁶PG XXXI, 1113-4; also *Basili Regula* (tr. by Rufinus) CXXII (pp. 148-51).

⁷*Ibid.*, 1119-22; also *Basili Regula* CLXIV (pp. 187-8).

monastic community. In response, Basil notes that we are told to convert sinners with gentleness and lenity, but when this does not stop the sinner from going farther in his sin, ὥς τῷ Κορινθίῳ, he must be seen as an outcast (ἐθνικόν). Basil says that there is no reason to hang on to what God has forbidden, citing Matt. 5:29-30 ("If your eye offends you...") and I Cor. 5:6 ("a little leaven...").⁸

This passage demonstrates Basil's approach in the monastic community: gentleness in rebuke at first, followed by more serious measures if the gentleness does not bring the recalcitrant brother into line with Basil's rules. We note, too, that he does not rule out exclusion from the community, but it is to be used as a last resort. The same use of the text will be seen in the following citation. His concern for the welfare both of the offender (chastising him with gentleness at first) and of the community (excommunicating the offender so that the little leaven will not corrupt the whole loaf) is apparent here, highlighting the problem facing anyone in a position of pastoral authority. It should be also noted that Basil speaks of exclusion from the *community*, not exclusion from the Church.

7. There is an allusion to I Cor. 5:2 in Basil's response to Question 84, in which the inquirer mentions monks who create an uproar in the community and then blame God for creating them in such a way. Basil responds that this opinion was previously judged to be heretical, and he says, "Ὡστε ἢ διορθωθήτω, ἢ ἐξαρθήτω ἐκ μέσου."⁹ This passage shows the two alternatives which Basil gives to his monks. He immediately follows it with a citation of I Cor. 5:6 ("A little leaven leavens the whole loaf"). The obedience of the monastic community is obviously of great importance to Basil. The similarity of this to his response to Question 57 is remarkable, both in its use of I Cor. 5:2 and 5:6 and in its interpretation; the monk is to give in to the orders of his superior, or be separated from the community, for their sake.

⁸*Ibid.*, 1121-22.

⁹*Ibid.*, 1141-2.

8. Question 293 of the *Regulae Brevius Tractatae* asks how those must be dealt with who avoid the great sins, but who commit "little" sins indiscriminately. Basil notes that in the New Testament this differentiation is not found; one sentence is set against all sins. He cites Matt. 18:15-17 ("If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault...") to demonstrate the need for reproof of all sin, and then says, φυλασσέσθω δὲ ἐπὶ πᾶσι τοῖς τοιούτοις τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀποστόλου εἰρημένον· Διὰ τὶ οὐ μᾶλλον ἐπενθήσατε, ἵνα ἐξαρθῇ ἐκ μέσου ὑμῶν ὁ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο ποιήσας. It is necessary to combine severity with patience and compassion.¹⁰

9. There is one reference to 5:2 in Basil's other great set of monastic rules, the *Regulae Fusius Tractatae*. In Question 28, it is asked what the attitude of all should be toward the disobedient. Basil responds that everyone should certainly be compassionate at first toward one who obeys the Lord's commandments reluctantly. He then says:

μη ἐντρεπόμενον δὲ μετὰ πολλὴν νουθεσίαν, μηδὲ ἰώμενον ἑαυτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις, ὡς αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ λυμεῶνα ὄντα, κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν, μετὰ πολλῶν μὲν δακρύων καὶ θρήνων, ὅμως δ' οὖν ὡς διεφθαρμένον μέλος καὶ παντελῶς ἄχρηστον, κατὰ τὴν τῶν ἱατρῶν μίμησιν, τοῦ κοινοῦ σώματος ἀποκόπτειν.¹¹

Basil's remark about the offender being his own destroyer is reminiscent of Origen's discussion of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart (Ex. 7:3 *et al.*), in which the Alexandrian theologian insists that it is Pharaoh's own fault, due to his sin. He then notes that, as physicians remove an incurably diseased member of the body, so it is necessary for those in authority to remove those members who show hostility to the Lord's commandments or create obstacles to them (ἐπὶ τῶν ἐχθραίνοντων ἢ ἐμποδιζόντων ταῖς ἐντολαῖς τοῦ Κυρίου). He cites Matt. 5:29 ("If your eye causes you to stumble...") and says that benevolence to such offenders is like the mistaken

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 1287-90.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 987-8.

kindness which Eli showed to his sons, contrary to the pleasure (τό ἀρέσκον) of God. He then refers to I Cor. 5:2, noting that the Corinthians should have removed the serious offender from their midst; he follows this with a citation of I Cor. 5:6: "A little leaven...".¹²

Basil's teaching here is fully consonant with what has already been seen in the *Regulae Brevius Tractatae*. One must be patient with those who are struggling to obey, but when disobedience continues (and this time Basil notes the refractory spirit of the disobedient ones), then separation from the community must follow.

10. A reference to I Cor. 5:2 occurs in Book II of Basil's work *De baptismo*, the genuineness of which has been doubted,¹³ but which has in recent years been affirmed.¹⁴ Ducatillon notes that, while the work was addressed to Christians, they were probably a monastic group.¹⁵ He is discussing the question whether one should have association with evildoers or be a participant in the unfruitful works of darkness. He first discusses the danger of walking too near the dividing line between good and evil, noting Paul's injunction to the Corinthians not to associate with any brother living in open sin (I Cor. 5:11).¹⁶ Later in the same chapter, Basil makes use of a lengthy *catena* contrasting those who have fellowship with evildoers and those who have fellowship with the people of God. He then cites I Cor. 5:2 (Οὐκ ἐπενθήσατε ἵνα ἐξαρθῇ ἐκ μέσου ὑμῶν ὁ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο ποιήσας), 5:6 (Μικρὰ ζύμη ὅλον τὸ φύραμα δολοῖ), and 5:7a (Ἐκκαθάρατε τὴν παλαιὰν ζύμην, ἵνα ᾗτε νέον φύραμα).¹⁷

¹²*Ibid.*, 987-90.

¹³i.e., by Migne; cf. *PG XXXI*, note at beginning of "Appendix operum s. Basilii Magni".

¹⁴i.e., by CPG and by Ducatillon in his introduction to the Sources Chrétiennes addition.

¹⁵*Basile de Césarée: Sur le Baptême*, pp. 17-20.

¹⁶*PG XXXI*, 1611-12 (*De baptismo* II, 9, 1).

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 1615-18.

These passages reveal Basil as a strong advocate for the purity of the Christian community. Ducatillon's idea that this work is addressed to a monastic community allows the teaching of this passage to tie in exactly with the teaching of the two great *Regulae*.

In summary, we see that Basil is greatly concerned that the Christian community be obedient; this emphasis holds whether he is speaking to the church as a whole or to a monastic community. Sin in any form is not to be tolerated; it must be rebuked and punished at once; there is no excuse for clinging to what the Lord has forbidden. It is already clear that Basil sees excommunication to be necessary for serious sin. Following in the steps of the Alexandrians, Clement and Origen, he views the expulsion as remedial in its purpose. Although Origen is concerned about the safety of the flock when he says that a serious offender must be excommunicated, he devotes most of his writing to the state of the offender and his restoration through penance; with Basil, there is a proportionately greater emphasis on the safety of the flock. Basil is concerned about offenders; he is equally concerned that the flock be kept safe. This is particularly noticeable in the monastic writings we have already examined. The rebellious monk must be segregated from the community so that his contagion will not spread.

B. VERSES 3-5

1. In chapter 6, Rule 72, of the *Moralia* there is a reference to I Cor. 5:4-5. Basil is supporting his idea that reprimand and reproof are necessary for setting sinners free from their vices. In this light, he employs a *catena* of scriptural citations, one of which is the Corinthian passage. He does not comment on it, but the context shows that he believes Paul's action to be for the purpose of correcting the sinner. The heading for this *catena* is more revealing of Basil's thought than the scriptural citations themselves. In his preface to the *catena*, Basil states his belief:

“Ὅτι δεῖ τὸν ἔλεγχον καὶ τὴν ἐπιτίμησιν οὕτως
δέχεσθαι, ὥς φάρμακον ἀναιρετικὸν πάθους, καὶ

υγείας κατασκευαστικόν. Ἐξ οὗ δὴλόν ἐστιν, ὅτι οἱ ἐν πάθει ἀνθρωπαρεσκειᾶς ἐπιείκειαν ὑποκρινόμενοι, καὶ μὴ ἐλέγχοντες τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας, τὸ ὅλον ζημιοῦσι, καὶ εἰς αὐτὴν ἀληθινὴν ζωὴν ἐπιβουλεύουσιν.¹⁸

Basil's belief in the necessity for reproof is clear from the latter part of this passage, and his description of reproof as being ὡς φάρμακον should be noted; we are confronted once again with the idea that forms the basis of Clement and Origen's teaching on penance: the punishment is to be medicinal.

2. There is another passing reference to v. 4 in Basil's work *De Spiritu Sancto* XXVII, 68. Basil is discussing the phrases "*in* the [Holy] Spirit" and "*with* the [Holy] Spirit". Basil notes that Paul uses the prepositions interchangeably, citing I Cor. 5:4 as a proof (Συναχθέντων ὑμῶν καὶ τοῦ ἐμοῦ Πνεύματος σὺν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ)¹⁹. Here Basil seems to take "my spirit" to refer to the Holy Spirit rather than to Paul's own spirit; the context certainly favours this interpretation. If this is the case, then Basil would interpret the phrase as meaning that the spirit present with the Corinthians when they met for judgment would be the Holy Spirit, which was empowering Paul to do what he did; he was "Paul's spirit" in the sense of being his motivator and empowerer. Alternately, since in this passage he is discussing the use of σὺν in relation to the Holy Spirit, it may be that he views the Holy Spirit as being the δύναμις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. This particular reference cannot be developed further, however, since Basil moves on to a new point here.

3. A brief but important reference to the terminology of v. 5 occurs in Basil's letter 188, chapter 7. This is a particularly important letter, since it is one of the three so-called *Canonical Epistles* sent to Amphilochius of Iconium, containing minute details of Basil's ideas on the administration of penance. The chapter in question concerns the penance assigned to those guilty of homosexuality, bestiality, murder,

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 849-50.

¹⁹*PG XXXII*, 195-6.

sorcery, adultery, and idolatry. Basil says that their penance may be shortened if they sinned through ignorance (...μετανοήσαντας ἐπὶ τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ ἣν ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ ἔπραξαν). He then says that some have been delivered to Satan "for a whole age of man" so that they may learn not to act shamefully. This may well be an allusion to I Tim. 1:20, ἴν which the offenders are handed over to Satan so that they may learn not to blaspheme; this is even more likely when we see that the Greek is very close, even rhyming with the original. Basil has, Σχεδὸν γὰρ ὅλην γενεὰν ἀνθρώπου παρεδόθησαν τῷ Σατανᾷ, ἵνα παιδευθῶσι μὴ ἀσχημονεῖν. The statement in I Tim. 1:20 ends with ἵνα παιδευθῶσι μὴ βλασφημεῖν.²⁰ Basil's understanding of "the whole age of man" is not clear; it is perhaps a reference to the entirety of the offender's life, particularly when one considers the lengthy penances Basil recommends in what are commonly called the *Canonical Epistles* (cf. below, under *Summary* of Basil's exegesis of the text).

It is obvious that Basil ties in the "handing over to Satan" with the penitential procedure. As to whether he views the excommunication as the total punishment (as opposed to seeing something else happen to the offender), we are not told. At this point he is merely concerned to stress the importance of lengthy penances for some sins.

4. In the examination of Basil's references to I Cor. 5:1-2 above, it was noted that *De iudicio Dei* included a full reference to vv. 3-5 as well as to v. 2. We will now turn to that passage. Basil's remarks here are extremely important:

Ἴδου τοίνυν ἐν Κορίνθῳ ὁ τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχων, οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἐγκληθεὶς εἰ μὴ τοῦτο μόνον αὐτὸς παραδίδοται τῷ Σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἄχρις ἂν τοῖς ἀξίοις τῆς μετανοίας καρποῖς διορθώσῃται τὸ πλημμέλημα, πᾶσαν δὲ ὁμοῦ τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν, ἐπεὶ μὴ ἐπεξῆλθε τῷ

²⁰*Saint Basile: Lettres*, II, p. 126.

Basil then goes on to discuss the case of Ananias, who experienced the judgment of God in the most severe way at the hands of Peter. Basil is concerned that Christians learn from the scriptural illustrations and walk closely with God, so that the Day of Judgment will not find them in danger.

This passage reveals Basil's equation of the ὀλεθρον τῆς σαρκὸς with the penitential procedure. His concept of διόρθωσις, straightening, perhaps implies the medicinal view of penance we have seen before. His use of πλημμέλημα is perhaps an indication of the influence of Origen, since the Alexandrian used the same term, and we know that Basil was an admirer of Origen;²² on the other hand, it is possible that it was by this time a common term for sin. Basil adopts the same view of the situation in Corinth as Origen, however: excommunication is necessary for this serious sin, but it is to lead to restoration. Several other points should be noted in this passage. First, Basil does not specify the exact nature of the relationship between the offender and the woman; the offender is said "to have" the "woman" of his father. Second, Basil says that Paul indicted the whole congregation at Corinth; they were guilty of not addressing the man's sin. Third, Basil makes it clear that he understands excommunication to be necessary in such a situation; the congregation was guilty precisely because they had not expelled the offender. Fourth, Basil implies that even this sin was remediable through penance (ἄχρις ἂν τοῖς ἀξιοῖς τῆς μετανοίας καρποῖς διορθώσῃται).

5. A reference to I Cor. 5:5 occurs in Basil's surviving homily on Ps. 44 (LXX). In his treatment of vv. 7-8 ("Your throne, o God, is forever and ever..."), Basil, adopting a Christological interpretation, says that this is a representation of the glory of Christ, whose kingdom is eternal. "O God" refers to Christ. Basil then

²¹PG XXXI, 669-70.

²²Quasten, III, p. 205, notes his collecting of Origen's *Philocalia* with Gregory of Nazianzus.

moves to the words, "Your royal sceptre is a sceptre of equity". The word in the LXX is ῥάβδος, and this leads Basil to note the word's alternate meaning, "rod", and he says that it is for correction (Παιδευτική τίς ἐστὶν ἡ ῥάβδος τοῦ θεοῦ) and notes that, after it has disciplined, it leads the disciplined ones to correctness of judgment. Basil stresses God's justice; the rod is not used indiscriminately. He notes both the comforting use of the rod (Ps. 23:4, RSV) and its destructive use (Ps. 2:9, which reads, Ποιμανεῖς γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ, ὥς σκεῦος κεραμέως συντρίψεις αὐτούς). He then says, Συντρίβεται δέ τὰ χοϊκὰ καὶ πῆλινα ἐπ' εὐεργεσίᾳ τῶν ποιμαινομένων· καθὼ καὶ παραδίδεται εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ.²³

This passage once more reveals Basil's understanding of the punishment invoked by Paul on the offender as remedial in its intention. He does not specify what he means by the χοϊκὰ and πῆλινα which must be crushed so that the man's spirit can be saved; it is possible that Basil has in mind some sort of physical suffering, since we have seen how he mentions Ananias in connection with the punishment of God in *De iudicio Dei*, chapter 7.²⁴ Basil's understanding of ῥάβδος as always signifying the same idea (with no possibility of differing meanings) is strongly reminiscent of Origen. Concerning this type of approach to the Scriptures, Bart D. Ehrman has noted (in reference to Didymus the Blind):

Such a spiritualized interpretation of the Biblical text presupposes that the Bible is a repository of divine teaching...The divine authorship of these books guarantees an absolute unity among them. Thus, the canon is not a collection of diverse books held in tension, but a unified collection of the teachings of God...in terms of theological and linguistical matters, any one passage of the Bible (Old or New Testament)

²³PG XXIX, 403-4.

²⁴PG XXXI, 669-72.

can be used to verify or amplify the interpretation of any other.²⁵

6. There is a reference to I Cor. 5:5 in the (dubious) Commentary on Isaiah, chapter 13. The author is treating Isa. 13: 5 (LXX), which speaks of the host the Lord is preparing for battle, which will come from a distant land. The Greek text then says, ἀπ' ἄκρου θεμελίου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ Κύριος καὶ οἱ ὅπλομάχοι αὐτοῦ, καταφθεῖραι πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην. The writer proceeds to interpret this in a spiritual sense: the hostile armies from far away represent demons, and he contrasts their armour with the "armour of God" (Eph. 6:15ff.) which faithful Christians wear. He then says:

οἱ δὲ πρὸς κόλασιν παραλαμβανόμενοι, πορρώθεν ἄγονται, κατακεχρημένου τῇ ὁμότητι αὐτῶν εἰς θεραπείαν ἡμετέραν τοῦ φιλανθρώπου θεοῦ, ὡς κατακέχρηται ὁ σοφὸς ἱατρὸς τῷ ἰῶ τῆς ἐχίδνης εἰς τὴν τῶν ἀσθενούντων ἰάσιν. Τοῖς μὲν τοιούτοις παραδίδοται οὐ τὸ πνεῦμα, ἀλλ' ἡ σὰρξ εἰς ὄλεθρον, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ. Ἀλλὰ καὶ Φύγελλος καὶ Ἑρμογένης ὑπὸ τοῦ Παύλου παρεδόθησαν τῷ Σατανᾷ, οὐκ εἰς ἀπώλειαν, ἀλλ' ἵνα παιδευθῶσι μὴ βλασφημεῖν.²⁶

The writer continues to say that the demons come from ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ because they were banished from there at the time of their rebellion.

Although the genuineness of this work is disputed, the sentiments are genuinely Basilian. The emphasis on the goodness of God and the medicinal nature of the punishment are strongly presented. The work of Satan is compared to the poison of a viper, and the severe measures to those of a physician making use venom to heal those who are weak or ill. This is a highly unusual illustration and should be noted; it is not used by any other writer examined in this thesis. Although unusual, it is still within the medicinal category of thought, and as such, could be the genuine work of Basil. The writer confuses the names of II Tim. 1:15 with the text of I Tim. 1:20, a

²⁵Ehrman, Bart D.: "The New Testament Canon of Didymus the Blind", *Vigiliae Christianae* 37 (1983), pp. 3-4 (full bibliographical details in next chapter).

²⁶PG XXX, 573-6.

mistake not uncommon in patristic writers. The exact nature of the punishment is not described here; whether the writer envisions it as mere excommunication or as involving something physically damaging to the body, we are not told. The purpose is remedial, not for the destruction of the persons involved. The devil is seen as under the control of God; dualism is strictly denied. We have already seen the idea in the works of Origen, that the devil operates only as an executioner under the authority of God. It will be seen further in the works of such writers as John Chrysostom, Theodoret and Jerome (cf. below).

7. There is one reference to I Cor. 5:3-5 in the *Regulae Brevius Tractatae*. In Question 164, the inquirer asks for an explanation of Matt. 7:1 (Μὴ κρίνετε, καὶ οὐ μὴ κριθήτε). In his response, Basil says that it is not a blanket prohibition, but that the Lord desires to teach us when, and when not, to use the faculty of judgment. It is clear, Basil says, that the Corinthians were not pleasing God when they refused to judge a man guilty of a serious offence. He then cites the Corinthian text as proof.²⁷ There is no further comment here.

In summary, Basil's treatment of vv. 3-5 strengthens the view already seen in his treatment of vv. 1-2; Paul's words in I Cor. are interpreted in the light of the prevailing penitential system of his day, and the punishment is restorative and remedial. Medicine gives Basil his normative category for interpreting the text. We see that excommunication from the Christian assembly is regarded as a necessary part of the healing, as well as essential for the safety of the faithful flock.

C. VERSES 7, 9, 11, AND 13

A reference to I Cor. 5:7 occurs in the dubious commentary on Isaiah. The writer is treating Isa. 1:12 (Τίς γὰρ ἐξεζήτησε ταῦτα ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν ὑμῶν;) and opts for a spiritual interpretation, saying that we should celebrate the πάσχα not with

²⁷PG XXXI, 1189-90; *Basili Regula* (Rufinus), question 77, pp. 111-12.

evil leaven, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (I Cor. 5:8).²⁸ The allusion to the *πάσχα* is probably a reference to I Cor. 5:7b, but there is no further comment on I Cor. 5 here.

Basil's two references to I Cor. 5:9 are to be found in the *Regulae Brevius Tractatae*.

1. Question 124 of that work asks whether, if one falls in with heretics or Gentiles (evidently referring to non-Christians), one should eat with them or salute them. Basil responds that we are not forbidden to greet such people; he cites Matt. 5:47 ("And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?") as proof. But, he adds, we are not to eat with professing Christians who are living beneath their profession. He says that we have the Apostle's prohibition at that point; he cites I Cor. 5:9-11, in which Paul adjures the Corinthians not even to eat with *τις ἀδελφὸς ὀνομαζόμενος* who is guilty of the vices which he lists.²⁹ This passage is interesting in that it is addressed to the monastic community, but is also a precept which Basil would follow at the congregational level. He evidently fears pollution more from false Christians than from professed heathens. Of course, the monastic communities were viewed as the Christian way *par excellence*, and this guidance would be doubly important in Basil's eyes.

2. The other reference occurs in Question 25, and although it is listed by the *Biblia Patristica* as a reference to I Cor. 5:9, it seems to be just as much a reference to II Thess. 3:14; in both contexts, Paul is concerned to warn the Christians of mixing with professed Christians living in rebellion and disobedience. Basil is addressing the subject of slander and cites τοῦ Ἀποστόλου παραγγέλλοντος for his support.³⁰

²⁸PG XXX, 171-2.

²⁹PG XXXI, 1165-8.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 1099-1100; *Basili Regula* (Rufinus) 31 and 32, pp. 86-7.

As with v. 9, Basil's references to v. 11 all occur in his monastic works, viz., in the *Regulae* and in *De baptismo*.

1. In Question 53 of the *Regulae Brevius Tractatae*, the defilement of the flesh and of the spirit are being discussed, as is holiness. Basil's response is that the defilement of the flesh is to do prohibited things; defilement of the spirit occurs when we are indifferent to these things. The pure man is the one who obeys the precept of the Apostle not even to eat with such people; he then says that the godly attitude toward evil should be that of Ps. 118:53 (LXX): Ἀθυμία κατέσχε με ἀπὸ ἁμαρτωλῶν τῶν ἐγκαταλιμπανόντων τὸν νόμον σου...³¹ In Question 297 of the same work, the interrogator asks how one ought to be converted from sin. Basil responds by describing the path of acknowledging one's sin and being sorrowful with the sorrow which leads to salvation (II Cor. 7:10), but he then says that a penitent person should not only stop sinning, but should also be removed from sinners. He cites Ps. 6:9 (Ἀπόστητε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, πάντες οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν... and then makes an allusion to the teaching of the Apostle, τῷ τοιούτῳ μηδὲ συνεσθίειν.³² In *De baptismo* I, 2, 21, Basil says that one newly born into the Christian faith should experience a change of environment, just as a newborn child does. Even while we are still on the earth, we will enjoy citizenship in Heaven, and our outward associations should reflect this. He cites Ps. 100:5-7 (LXX) as support; the writer of this psalm is vowing to exclude evildoers from his court and land. Basil then cites I Cor. 5:11 (Paul's command not to mix with evildoers) in full.³³ In *De baptismo* II, 5, 2, Basil is pressing for a complete break from sin in his readers' lives. He cites I Cor. 5:11 in support of this, as well as some of the Pauline admonitions to the Christian community ("Do not lie to one another"—Col. 3:9; "Put away all wrath and

³¹*Ibid.*, 1117-8; *Basili Regula* (Rufinus) 147, p. 173.

³²*Ibid.*, 1291-4.

³³*Sur le Baptême*, p. 172-3.

anger..."—Eph. 4:31).³⁴ In *De baptismo* II, 9, 1, Basil says that one should not have fellowship with transgressors of the Law; he cites I Cor. 5:11 as proof.³⁵

These passages show Basil's firm desire that those adopting monasticism as their life should break free from all associations which might drag them down. Certainly Basil would apply the spirit of this advice to the congregations of non-monastic Christians under his care, but he is aware that the latter will have contact with the world which monastic Christians will not.

Basil has several references to I Cor. 5:13, all of which occur in his *Regulae*:

1. In Question 47 of the *Regulae Fusius Tractatae*, Basil is addressing the issue of contumacious monks. He cites Prov. 22:10 (Ἐκβαλλε γάρ...λοιμὸν ἐκ συνεδρίου, καὶ συνεξελεύσεται αὐτῷ νεῖκος...), followed by I Cor. 5:13 (Ἐξάρατε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν.) and I Cor. 5:6 (...μικρά ζύμη ὅλον τὸ φύραμα ζυμοῖ.).³⁶

2. In Question 86 of the *Regulae Brevius Tractatae*, the question of monks who are too independent arises: they neither receive anything from, nor give anything to, the community. This may have been part of what E.F. Morison has called "competitive asceticism", which Basil refuses to allow; Dr. Lowther Clarke has shown that Basil viewed a return to anchoritism as a reversion, and refused to allow any of his monks to do any self-imposed fasting.³⁷ The question addressed to Basil may involve this monastic idea of heroism. His response is, "If this one does not hold to the doctrine of the Lord, who said, 'Love one another, as I have loved you', let us hold to the Apostle, who said, 'Ἐξάρατε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν.'" As in his response to Question 47 of the *Regulae Fusius Tractatae* (cf. preceding paragraph), he

³⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 230-1.

³⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 268-9.

³⁶PG XXXI, 1035-8.

³⁷Clarke, *St Basil the Great*, p. 89.

then cites I Cor. 5:6.³⁸ The communal life is essential to his view of monasticism, and independence of this sort must not be allowed.

3. In Question 155 of the *Regulae Brevius Tractatae*, the interrogator asks what should be done with monks serving the sick, but refuse to treat the weak as the brothers of the Lord. Basil's response is first to show his scriptural backing for stating that the sick are members of the Lord's family (Matt. 12:50: "For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother") and then to say that a monk should realise that he is a sinner and thus a slave to sin (Jn. 8:34), proceeding to change his ways. If the monk persists in clinging to his evil attitudes, he must be expelled, since "the slave does not remain in the house" (Jn. 8:35), and the Apostle has commanded, Ἐξάρατε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν.³⁹

This concludes the survey of Basil's use of the relevant verses in I Cor. 5.

D. I TIMOTHY 1:20

One passage citing both I Cor. 5:5 and I Tim. 1:20 has already been noted above in section B, part 6; it is from the dubious Commentary on Isaiah. However, there is one further use of I Tim. 1:20 that is highly important for grasping Basil's understanding of the Παραδοῦναι τῷ Σατανᾷ terminology. This passage occurs in the *Homilia in principium Proverbiorum*. Basil, after contrasting divine and human wisdom, says that the profane and common people should be kept away from the godly teachings (θείων διδασκαλιῶν). Citing Prov. 1:28 (Ζητήσουσι με κακοί, καὶ οὐχ εὐρήσουσι), he says that this is true because evil ones have not been cleansed by the fear of God. This leads him to discuss the discipline which God applies to his children. He then notes:

Ὡσπερ γὰρ τῶν παίδων οἱ νήπιοι, κατολιγορῶντες
τῶν μαθημάτων, μετὰ τὰς μάστιγας ἅς οἱ
διδάσκαλοι αὐτοῖς ἢ παιδαγωγοὶ προσάγουσι,

³⁸PG XXXI, 1143-4; *Basili Regula* (Rufinus) XXX, p. 77.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 1183-4.

προσεχέστεροι γενόμενοι, δέχονται τὰ διδάγματα, καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος πρὸ μὲν τῶν πληγῶν οὐκ ἠκούετο, μετὰ δὲ τὰς ἐκ τῶν μαστίγων ὁδύνας, ὡς ἄρτι τῶν ὧτων διανοιγέντων, καὶ παρεδέχθη τῇ ἄκοῃ, καὶ διεφυλάχθη τῇ μνήμῃ· οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν παρακουόντων τῆς θείας διδασκαλίας καὶ καταφρονητικῶς πρὸς τὰς ἐντολὰς διακειμένων συμβαίνει... Ἐπεὶ οὖν ἡ παιδεία νοθετεῖ τὸν ἄτακτον, ὡς ἐποίει ὁ Παῦλος παραδιδούς τῷ Σατανᾷ, οἷον δημίῳ τινὶ στρεβλοῦντι καὶ μαστίζοντι, ἵνα παιδευθῶσι μὴ βλασφημεῖν· τὸν δὲ ἀφηνιαστὴν ἐπανάγει, ὡς περὶ οὗ εἴρηται, ὅτι Ὑστερον αἰχμαλωσίας αὐτοῦ μετενόησεν...⁴⁰

This remarkable passage clearly captures Basil's penitential doctrine; it is medicinal and educational (note the illustration of the παιδαγωγοί), not irrevocably punitive. Basil's use of the words μάστιγας (and its cognates) and δημίῳ should be noted; these words in this context are already familiar from the writings of Origen,⁴¹ and they show that the Alexandrian theologian is definitely the model for Basil in his approach to interpreting the παραδοῦναι τῷ Σατανᾷ phraseology.

E. SUMMARY

In summary, we may say that Basil faithfully follows in the footsteps of Origen in his interpretation of I Cor. 5:3-5. He uses the medical terminology and, even more important, the medicinal concepts of the Alexandrian exegete. In Basil's first reference to vv. 3-5 which is examined in this chapter, we find the word φάρμακον, and this is a key to his understanding of the whole penitential process. He sees the punishment as involving excommunication; as is the case with Origen, Basil says nothing about whether he thinks that the punishment will involve more than this (i.e., sickness, etc.), and it is meant to lead to restoration. Basil's reference to Satan as the δῆμιος who executes the judgment of God upon Christians, and who does only what he is allowed to by the Supreme Authority, shows another connection with Origen.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 395-6.

⁴¹for παιδεύση and μαστιγώση, cf. Origen's *Commentary on Matthew* (Tom. XVI, 21); for δῆμιοι, cf. *Contra Celsum* VII:70.

As will be seen below, this term is also used by John Chrysostom and Theodoret in their understanding of the Corinthian text. Although Basil reveals the strong influence of Origen, he does not use Origen's classic phrase, φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός,⁴² in his references to the Corinthian passage.

We see that Basil interpreted I Cor. 5:3-5, coupled with II Cor. 2:5-10, as teaching excommunication, followed by restoration after penance. However, it should be noted that for Basil this emphatically does not mean that serious sins may be forgiven quickly and easily. What are commonly called the *Canonical Epistles* (nos. 188, 199, and 217) make it clear that penitence was costly to the person performing it. The penalties are incredibly lengthy: unpremeditated homicide calls for eleven years of penance; wilful homicide calls for twenty years; adultery, fifteen years; fornication, seven years; apostasy calls for lifelong penitence and the guilty one is readmitted to communion only on the approach of death.⁴³ Watkins notes that Basil inherited a system of graded penance already in place in the provinces of Asia Minor (including Cappadocia), and that he was not the originator of these heavy penances.⁴⁴ Still, in spite of these lengthy sentences, restoration was the final aim, and Basil interprets I Cor. 5:3-5 (and II Cor. 2:5-10) as teaching that it is possible and will happen.

Where Basil is truly original in his use of the text is in his application of it to a monastic milieu. Christian monasticism already existed before Basil's time, of course; as in the case of the graded-penance system already in existence in Cappadocia, Basil stepped into an already existent monasticism and contributed immensely to it. What strikes a historian of exegesis is Basil's transplanting of the Corinthian passage into a monastic setting without even questioning whether the procedure is legitimate or not. The passage is thus used to address, not a local

⁴²cf. Origen's surving *Catenae* on I Cor. 5, in particular (p. 364); bibliography in previous chapter.

⁴³cited by Watkins, *A History of Penance* I, pp. 298-300.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 321-2.

congregation, but a congregation of those who have chosen the ascetic life. The estrangement of the offender from the community desired by Paul has become the estrangement of an offending brother from the fellowship of ascetics, but it seemingly has no bearing on his standing in a local congregation; i.e., in his exegesis of the Corinthian text, Basil gives no indication as to whether or not a monk suspended from communion in his monastic community would be able to attend a local congregation of non-monastic Christians and receive communion there. The sins addressed in Basil's monastic writings are usually of a much less glaring sort than that which Paul rebukes in Corinth. This sudden twist to what has been observed in the history of the exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 up to this point is a startling one; given Basil's reverence for Origen, it is probable that the approach described by Ehrman (cf. above under Vv. 3-5, section 6) is responsible for this sudden change of environment, which Basil seems to make without any question whatsoever. This "jewel-box" approach to Scripture views it as a unified whole, from which texts may be selected at random for support. Basil is more interested in supporting his monastic ideas than in exegeting the scriptures in context⁴⁵, and Origen is almost certainly to blame for this. Basil is followed in this approach most particularly by John Cassian (cf. below), but the Cappadocian is the first writer to have used this text in the monastic milieu, giving the history of I Cor. 5:3-5 an entirely new direction.

II. GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS

Gregory of Nazianzus has very few references to the relevant verses in I Cor. 5; in fact, none at all to vv. 1-2. Therefore, we will proceed at once to his citations of vv. 3-5.

⁴⁵Of course, is monasticism if viewed as the true Christianity, such an exegesis of the Bible is perhaps inevitable.

A. VERSES 3-5

1. The first reference occurs in *Oration 24*, 15, which is in honor of Cyprian. He mentions that Cyprian was absent in body, in exile, but that he was present with his flock in spirit, and was able to assist them by his writings to them (by means of a scribe).⁴⁶ This particular way of referring to I Cor. 5:4 is also used by Dionysius of Alexandria, i.e., directing his flock by means of letters,⁴⁷ etc. In Gregory's use of the text at this point, there seems to be no indication that he is referring to apostolic power exercised in the bodily absence of Cyprian.⁴⁸ It is possible that, by this time, the text has become familiar enough to be used in a proverbial way, as it is in our culture today.

2. The other citation from this portion of I Cor. 5 is found in *Oration 2*, 54, his defence of his flight to Pontus and his return. He is praising the Apostle Paul and discussing the variety of his character. In this context, he says, Νῦν ἀφορίζει, νῦν ἁγάπην κυροῖ.⁴⁹ This is probably an allusion to I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2. We have seen that Origen identifies the offenders in these respective chapters as the same man; thus, Paul in I Cor. 5 commanded the expulsion of the man, but once penance was done, the Apostle exhorted the Corinthians to receive him again into their fellowship (II Cor. 2). We have already noted how Basil agrees with this identification. Browne and Swallow think that this brief reference in Gregory's second oration shows the same agreement⁵⁰, as does Mossay.⁵¹

3. There is one other allusion in Gregory's writings which is almost certainly a reference to I Cor. 5:3-5. In chapter 17 of *Oration 39*, entitled *In sancta lumina* (an

⁴⁶*Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 24-26*, pp. 72-3.

⁴⁷cited by Eusebius in his *Church History* (Book VII, 11); he seems to indicate letters (cf. appendix).

⁴⁸Mossay devotes considerable space (pp. 12-24) to discussing Gregory's possible confusion of two different Cyprians; however, the answer to this question does not affect his use of the Corinthian text.

⁴⁹*Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 1-3*, pp. 162-3.

⁵⁰LNPF, second series, VII, p. 216.

⁵¹*Discours 1-3, op. cit.*, p. 162.

Epiphany sermon), Gregory discusses various types of baptism: that which was in water, but which was typological (which the Jews received in the Red Sea); that which was of water and repentance (John the Baptist); that which is of the Spirit (which Jesus alone gives); that which is martyrdom (which, Gregory says, is very great, since it cannot be defiled by further stains); and a fifth baptism, that of laborious penitence.⁵² In chapter 18, he proceeds to refute the Novatianist argument, which would deny that penitence avails for serious sins. Gregory sees this as a new Pharisaism and notes the forgiveness meted out to David (II Sam. 12:13) and to Peter (Jn. 21:15ff.). He then adds, Οὐδὲ ἐν Κορίνθῳ παρανομέσαντα; Παῦλος δὲ καὶ ἀγάπην ἐκύρωσεν, ἐπειδὴ τὴν διόρθωσιν εἶδε· καὶ τὸ αἴτιον· Ἵνα μὴ τῇ περισσοτέρᾳ λύπῃ καταποθῇ ὁ τοιοῦτος, βαρῆθεις τῇ ἀμετρίᾳ τῆς ἐπιπλήξεως.⁵³ The reference to II Cor. 2:7 is clear, and the context strongly favours interpreting the earlier part of this reference as an allusion to I Cor. 5. The previous reference shows the probability of Gregory's identification of the offenders in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2, as does this one. Heinz Althaus, discussing this oration, notes:

Zunächst fällt die Tatsache auf, daß die Buße in einer Linie mit der Taufe steht. Die Buße ist die fünfte Taufe. Der entscheidende Unterschied zur eigentlichen Taufe aber ist er, daß die Vergebung der Sünden in der Buße ungleich schwieriger zu erlangen ist. Voraussetzung dazu sind eine echte und tiefe Reue und harte Bußwerke, die im Verhältnis zur Größe der Sünden stehen sollen. Wer sich nach der Taufe schwerer Verfehlungen schuldig gemacht hat, muß sich die göttliche Verzeihung erst durch Werke verdienen. Ganz anders ist es bei der Taufe.⁵⁴

⁵²PG XXXVI, 353-6.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 355-8.

⁵⁴Althaus: *Die Heilslehre des heiligen Gregor von Nazianz*, pp. 193-4.

Althaus also notes that for Gregory, all sins may be forgiven: "Eine unvergebbare Sünde gab es für Gregor nicht."⁵⁵

Gregory has been noted for his appreciation of Origen (and here he uses one of Origen's words, ἐπιπλήξεως, in the same context)⁵⁶, which often leads him to search for a spiritual meaning in the text, although he reveals a strong awareness of the necessity of understanding the historical sense of a passage before deciding what the spiritual meaning is.⁵⁷ It is interesting to see that in his references to the Corinthian text, he sticks closely to the historical, literal sense; there is no attempt at spiritualising. Gallay has also noted, "L'exégèse est souvent liée à la defense de la doctrine."⁵⁸ This is perhaps the case with his use of the Corinthian passage. It is viewed in the context of the penitential system of the Church, and Gregory would not tamper with that.

B. VERSES 7, 9, 11 AND 13

1. There is an allusion to I Cor. 5:7 in Epistle 101, one of Gregory's letters against Apollinarianism. He is refuting the Apollinarian charge that the human mind is corrupt, so that in Christ it was replaced by the divine Logos. Gregory notes that the body is even more corrupt than the mind, and yet that Christ assumed a body; the clay (πηλός) has been leavened and has become a νέον φύραμα.⁵⁹ Although extremely interesting in its context, this allusion does not add to our understanding of Gregory's exegesis of the Corinthian text.

This concludes Gregory's use of the relevant passages in I Cor. 5, and he does not cite I Tim. 1:20 at all. He contributes little to our further understanding of the exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 by the Cappadocians. It is clear that he interprets it in the

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 196.

⁵⁶cf. Origen's surviving *Catena*e on I Cor. 5 (p. 363); bibliography in previous chapter.

⁵⁷Gallay: "Grégoire de Nazianze le Théologien", *Le monde grec ancien et la Bible*, p. 325.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 327.

⁵⁹*Grégoire de Nazianze: Lettres Théologiques (Eps. 101, 46)*, pp. 56-7.

light of the penitential procedure, and that it is a medicinal and restorative measure. He is in firm agreement with Basil and (as will be seen) with Gregory of Nyssa at this point, and with them follows in the footsteps of Origen, whom he greatly admired.

III. GREGORY OF NYSSA

A. VERSES 1-2

1. Gregory of Nyssa refers to the situation in Corinth in his third oration on the Beatitudes. Under μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, he is discussing the place of sadness of repentance, tying it in with Paul's practice of rebuking his congregations when necessary. He notes:

καθάπερ καὶ ὁ Παῦλος τὸν τῇ κοίτῃ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐπιλυσσῆσαντα, μέχρις ἐκείνου μαστίζει τῷ λόγῳ, ἕως ἂν ἀναισθήτως εἶχεν τῆς ἁμαρτίας· ἐπεὶ δὲ καθίκετο τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἢ τῆς ἐπιπλήξεως ἰατρεία, ὡς ἤδη μακάριον διὰ τοῦ πένθους γενόμενον, παρακαλεῖν ἄρχεται, ἵνα μὴ τῇ περισσοτέρῃ λύπῃ, φησί, καταποθῇ ὁ τοιοῦτος...Ταύτης δὲ φάρμακον τὸ ἐκ μετανοίας πένθος ἀποδέδεικται.⁶⁰

This passage is immensely important for understanding Gregory's exegesis of the Corinthian passage. The vocabulary shows a close affinity to Basil, with its use of μαστίζει and its medical terminology (φάρμακον), which is the most obvious in the final lines of the passage cited here. His identification of the penitent offender of II Cor. 2 with the sinner of I Cor. 5 is made confidently, as is the case with the other two Cappadocians. The very frame of reference (μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες) is indicative of Gregory's stance; to mourn (for sin) is blessed because it leads to restoration. The reference to ἐπιπλήξεως shows a possible debt to Origen or Basil (or both), since both use this term in the context of I Cor. 5:4-5/II Cor. 2:5-11.⁶¹

2. A reference to the Corinthian situation occurs in the *Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarium*. Gregory has just cited I Thess. 5:23, in which Paul states his

⁶⁰PG XLIV, 1221-2.

⁶¹cf. Origen's *Catena* on I Corinthians, p. 363 (bibliography in preceding chapter).

wish that the spirit, soul, and body of his listeners "be kept sound and blameless until the day of Jesus Christ" (RSV). He proceeds to speak of the different types of men—σάρκινος, πνευματικός, and ψυχικός. He states his belief that, even when speaking of types, we do not mean that those thus characterised do not have the other components of the human nature; as an illustration, he notes that. ὁ κατὰ τῆς εὐνῆς τῆς πατρῶας τῷ τῆς σαρκὸς πάθει λυσσῆσας, οὔτε ἄψυχος ἦν, οὔτε διανοίας κεχώριστο...⁶² We are told nothing else about Gregory's understanding of this passage at this point.

3. A reference to the situation in Corinth is found in Gregory's brief ascetic treatise, *De castigatione*. Defending his use of his episcopal powers (which some of his flock evidently thought to be overly harsh), he says that they are not to think that the bishop's power of separation (ἀφορισμός) is presumptuous; rather, this law has been transmitted from the Fathers and is the rule of the Church. He then proceeds:

θεώρησον τὸν ἅγιον Παῦλον δι' ἐπιστολῶν τὰς ἀποφάσεις τοῦ ἀφορισμοῦ κατὰ τῶν ὑπευθύνων ἐκπέμποντα, καὶ τὸν Κορίνθιον νεανίσκον τῷ τοιούτῳ ἰατρεύοντα φαρμάκῳ, τὸν τῇ μητρὶ σατανικῶς ἐπιμανέντα.⁶³

Gregory, like Origen, states that the woman was the man's mother-in-law (μητρὶ). He definitely understands that the punishment inflicted on the offender was excommunication, although he does not say whether he thinks that this is the total punishment. He implies that bishops have inherited the apostolic power of excommunication. Gregory's view of penance as medicinal is also obvious; the young man was to be healed by such a medicine. Thus, penance is restorative, and the bishop exercises the Power of the Keys.

⁶²Gregorii Nysseni Opera III, 1, p. 210.

⁶³PG XLVI, 313-4.

Aside from the above reference, which covers the territory of I Cor. 5:5 in its general reference to the Corinthian situation, Gregory has no references to I Cor. 5:4-5 *per se*.

B. VERSES 7, 9, 11, and 13

These citations are, for the most part, brief. I will group them together, with the exception of the final reference.

There are two brief allusions to I Cor. 5:7-8 in Book II of Gregory's *De vita Moysis*. In a spiritualised account of the Exodus, he notes that, just as unleavened bread was eaten in the mystery of the Πάσχα, so we are to understand that there is to be no remnant of evil remaining in our lives. After baptism (symbolised by the crossing of the Red Sea), there should be a completely new beginning.⁶⁴ But, he notes shortly afterward, many who receive baptism do not understand the commandments of the Law and mix the bad leaven of the old life with the new life.⁶⁵ The *Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarium* also has a reference to I Cor. 5:7; it is a reference to Christ being the πάσχα sacrificed for us. He does not elaborate on the text here.⁶⁶ Similarly, in a passage from his *Commentarius in Canticum Canticorum* (Oration 5), Gregory contrasts the two covenants, old and new, saying that each had their πάσχα,⁶⁷ probably a reference to I Cor. 5:7. In two passages from *De perfectione*, he refers to Christ as the Πάσχα among his other titles;⁶⁸ there is no commentary on the Corinthian text here. In *De instituto christiano* (the genuineness of which is disputed), the writer, after referring to II Cor. 5:17 (Εἴ τις ἐν χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθε"), says that as a consequence, we should purge

⁶⁴Grégoire de Nysse: *La Vie de Moïse*, pp. 68-9.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*

⁶⁶*Gregorii Nysseni Opera* III, I, p. 203.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, VI, p. 162.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, VIII, I, pp. 175 and 186.

ourselves of old leaven, καὶ τὸ Ἐορτάζωμεν, μὴ ἐν ζύμῃ παλαιᾷ, ἀλλ' ἐν ἄζύμοις εἰλικρινείας καὶ ἀληθείας.⁶⁹ He does not comment further.

The final reference for us to examine occurs in Gregory's homilies on Ecclesiastes, and it is an important one. In *Homily 7* he is treating the verse, "[There is] a time to rend, and a time to sew" (Eccl. 3:7). He notes that it is good to be joined (sewn) to the Lord, but to be sundered from evil. He cites I Cor. 5:13 (Ἐξάρατε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν) and notes that this is the command which the "divine Apostle" gives when he exhorts the man who has been condemned for his [sexual] intercourse to be "rent asunder" (ἀπορραγῆναι) from the community, since a little leaven will corrupt the whole "loaf" of the prayer of the Church. Gregory then notes that, on the other hand, Paul desires to restore to fellowship the man who has repented, saying, Μὴ τῇ περισσοτέρᾳ λύπῃ καταποθῇ ὁ τοιοῦτος. This, says Gregory, shows that Paul knew how to rend asunder the soiled portion of the Church's garment at the right time, and also to sew it on again at the right time when it had been cleansed of its stain through repentance.⁷⁰

This passage shows clearly that Gregory believes in the remedial power of penance to restore a fallen Christian to fellowship with the Church; Paul (II Cor. 2:7) counseled a "resewing" of the penitent back into the fellowship of the Christian assembly. This passage also shows us that Gregory, in agreement with Origen, believes in the necessity of excommunication for a serious offender, but he also believes in restoration as its end. However, we know from his letter to Letoius of Melitene⁷¹ that Gregory does not favour a speedy reunion with the Church. He lists some of the lengthy penances involved for serious sins: apostasy incurs a lifelong penance, fornication incurs nine years, and wilful murder or homicide, twenty-seven

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 61-2.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, V, p. 408.

⁷¹*PG* XLV, 221-36.

years. Full forgiveness is available, but it is not easy to obtain. This attitude fits in with that of Gregory of Nazianzus, that the forgiveness of sins in penance is far more difficult to obtain than the forgiveness offered in baptism.⁷² Kallistos Ware notes, however:

Not that the penance should be regarded as a punishment; still less should it be viewed as a way of expiating an offence. Salvation is a free gift of grace. By our own efforts we can never wipe out our guilt: Christ the one mediator is our only atonement, and either we are freely forgiven by him, or else we are not forgiven at all...Here, as always, we should think primarily in therapeutic rather than juridical terms. A penance is not a punishment, nor yet a means of expiation, but a means of healing....⁷³

In summary, Gregory shows himself very much the follower of his elder brother, Basil. The reverence for Origen, the stance on the full availability of forgiveness, and the emphasis on lengthy penances to obtain it for serious sins committed after baptism are all characteristic of both brothers.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, all the Cappadocians hold together in their Origenistic approach to the Corinthian text. It involves excommunication; it is remedial; it is restorative. The offenders of I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2 are the same man. It is significant, too, that none of the Cappadocians goes beyond Origen in what they think the punishment consists of; they stop with describing it as excommunication. It will be for later writers (cf. below, the School of Antioch) to suggest that not only excommunication, but other unpleasantness as well, may be involved in the punishment meted out to the offender in Corinth by St. Paul.

⁷²cf. Althaus, pp. 193, 194, and 196 (cited above).

⁷³Ware, "The Orthodox Experience of Repentance", p. 25.

APPENDIX B:

OTHER WRITERS OF THIS REGION

The Cappadocians were not the only fourth-century writers in the region of the eastern Mediterranean to make use of I Corinthians 5. In this appendix, we will examine the works of their near neighbour, Amphilochius of Iconium, but we will also observe the relevant passages in two writers from the nearby area of Antioch and Syria, in addition to the anonymous work *De recta in Deum fide* (also known as *the Dialogue of Adamantius*). The order here is roughly chronological.

1. *DE RECTA IN DEUM FIDE*

There is considerable difficulty in dating this anonymous work, as well as discovering its provenance. It is most probably a product of the early fourth century, since it contains a reference to an emperor who had recently destroyed temples and idols; Hort notes that this could apply only to Constantine in his later years (330-7).¹ Also, the work makes use of the writing of Methodius, who died as a martyr c. 311. Likewise, the place of its composition remains a mystery, although Syria is favoured by Quasten² and the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. In this work, Adamantius, a Christian, answers the objections of Marcionites, Valentinians, and Bardesanists. The name "Adamantius" caused it to be ascribed to Origen (known as Origen Adamantius) as early as the time of Rufinus (late fourth century), but, as Quasten notes, the content shows the writer to be much more in the school of thought of Methodius, Origen's avowed foe.³

A. The first reference in the *Dialogue* occurs as Adamantius debates with Marcus the Marcionite, concerning the idea of two gods characteristic of the latter

¹Hort, "Adamantius", *Dictionary of Christian Biography* I, p. 40.

²Quasten, *Patrology* II, p. 147.

³*Ibid.*, p. 146.

system--a good and loving God in the New Testament, as opposed to the God of the Old Testament, who is either evil (according to Marcion) or merely just (according to his teacher, Cerdo), not loving. Marcus insists that condemnation and punishment are carried out by the inferior God, the δημιουργός. Adamantius refutes him by referring to Rom. 2:16, in which Paul says that God will judge the secrets of men, and then follows this with a citation of the Corinthian text:

Ἦκουε τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀπόστολος λέγοντος· ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ ὡς ἀπὸν τῷ σώματι, παρὼν δὲ τῷ πνεύματι, ἤδη κέκρικα ὡς παρὼν τὸν οὕτω τοῦτο κατεργασάμενον. ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, συναχθέντων ὑμῶν καὶ τοῦ ἐμοῦ πνεύματος, σὺν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ, παραδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ Σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον.⁴

Thus, Adamantius uses the Corinthian text to illustrate that there is only one God, who both saves and judges.

B. The second reference occurs in the words of Marcus. Adamantius and Megethius (another Marcionite) have been arguing about the nature of body and soul. Marcus interrupts, saying that Adamantius's arguments against Megethius seem to be beautifully spoken, but that Marcionites prefer to speak of "spirit", just as Paul says: παρέδωκα τὸν τοιοῦτον εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ.⁵ This leads to a discussion of the nature (source) of the human spirit, but nothing is contributed to the elucidation of the Corinthian text.

C. Another reference to I Cor. 5:5 in the Dialogue occurs when Marcus and Adamantius are discussing II Cor. 4:4. Marcus's Marcionite theology demands that the "god of this world", who has blinded the eyes of humanity, be the demiurge; whom he avers is therefore proven to be evil. Adamantius replies, rather, that the phrase refers to the good God of the New Testament; but the only ones whose eyes he

⁴GCS IV, pp. 64-7. This edition gives the parallel Latin translation of Rufinus.

⁵Ibid., pp. 72-3.

has blinded are the infidels. When Marcus asks how the good God could blind men's eyes, Adamantius responds:

Ὁ μὲν δημιουργὸς τοὺς ἀπίστως αὐτῷ
προσερχόμενους τυφλοῖ· ὃν δὲ λέγεις ἀγαθώτερον
τοῦ δημιουργοῦ, τὸν Χριστόν, ἄκουε πῶς κελεύει
βληθῆναι τοὺς μὴ πιστεύοντας αὐτῷ εἰς τὸ σκότος
τὸ ἐξώτερον. ὅπου ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν
ὀδόντων, πῶς δὲ καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος, τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ὦν,
παραδίδωσι τῷ σατανᾷ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους λέγων·
παρέδωκα τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον. τί
οὖν ἐστὶ ἄμεινον, τυφλοῦσθαι τοὺς μὴ πιστεύοντας
τῷ θεῷ, ἢ εἰς τὸ σκότος βάλλεσθαι, καὶ τῷ σατανᾷ
παραδίδοσθαι;⁶

Thus, Adamantius shows that the Marcionite view of Christ as the messenger of a good God who does not judge does not square with the scriptural evidence; Christ speaks of (his) God binding people and casting them into outer darkness, and Paul, who was the emissary of the good God, according to Marcion, surrendered a man to Satan for punishment. As the following passage will show, the context shows that Adamantius thinks that the punishments he has described are worse than that to which Marcus objects.

The neutral onlooker, Eutropius, who is serving as judge in the debate, alludes to I Corinthians 5 when he summarises:

Ὁ τυφλωθεὶς ἐνὸς μόνον μέλους πόνον βραχὺν νῦν
ὑπέμεινε, τῶν λοιπῶν μελῶν σώων ὄντων, ὁ δὲ
βληθεὶς εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον, ὅπου ὁ
κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων, καὶ ὁ τῷ
σατανᾷ παραδοθεὶς πάντων ἀπαξιαπλῶς τῶν μελῶν
βλάβην ὑπομένουσιν. ἄμεινον οὖν ἐνὸς μέλους
βλάβην ὑπομεῖναι ἢ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα βασάνοις
παραδίδοσθαι.⁷

Thus, he assigns the victory in this argument to Adamantius, who has shown that II Cor. 4:4 refers not to the demiurge, but to the God of the New Testament.

⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 112-3.

⁷*Ibid.* Since this is an allusion rather than a citation, I have italicised the reference, rather than putting it in bold type, as is my custom with direct quotations.

The main thrust of this portion of the *Dialogue* is to prove the existence of one God, and one alone, who is good, but who also judges, both now and in the future. The Corinthian test is used to support these arguments. Adamantius does not treat the clause, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου, since it is not the portion of the text he is interested in; it is the fact that the New Testament God, his Christ, and his apostle, all speak of judgment. Eutropius's response is in reference only to II Cor. 4:4; the *Dialogue* moves on to other subjects following this, and Eutropius's judgment is not the culminating point in the debate. In addition, he is not a Christian, and his understanding of the text (that it seems to refer to total destruction) is not necessarily that of Adamantius. Eutropius merely concedes that Adamantius has shown that II Cor. 4:4 is consonant with the rest of New Testament teaching, and that the Marcionite objection is weak.

2. EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA

Eusebius (who died c. 340) has only reference to I Cor. 5:3-5 in his *Historiae ecclesiasticae*; it is in a report of the letters of Dionysius of Alexandria⁸ and will be treated in the next chapter. However, there is a reference to the text in his commentary on the Psalms, in a treatment of Ps. 38:8-12 (LXX), in which the Psalmist asks Ἀπὸ πασῶν τῶν ἀθεσιῶν μου ἐξέλου με, ἐπονείδιστον ἄφρονι μὴ τάξης με. After discussing some of the textual variants, Eusebius asserts:

Ὅπερ παράκλησιν ἐμφαίνει τοῦ ἡμαρτηκότος, ἰκετεύοντος μὴ παραδοθῆναι εἰς ὀνειδισμόν ἄφρονι. Εἰ δ' αὐτὸς ὁ Κύριος παραδίδωσιν ἄφρονι τὸν ἡμαρτηκότα, ὀνειδίζεσθαι πρὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ τοῦτο ἂν εἴποις ἐπ' ὠφελείᾳ γίνεσθαι τοῦ ὀνειδιζομένου, ὥς ἂν, κακούμενος, μείζονα ποιήσοιτο τὴν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἡμαρτημένοις ἐξομολόγησιν...⁹

⁸*Historiae Ecclesiasticae* VII, 11; *PG* XX, 665.

⁹*PG* XXIII, 348-9.

The final word in the passage just cited is important; ἐξομολόγησις has been seen to be a crucial word in the penitential terminology of the Church. What is important here is that it shows that Eusebius is thinking in terms of the penitential system of the Church of his day in his interpretation of this psalm. This is highly reminiscent of Origen, to whom Eusebius devoted a great amount of space in his *Historiae ecclesiasticae*. In the Alexandrian writer's treatment of Psalm 37 (LXX), he ties the text in even more firmly with the penitential procedure of his day. Eusebius shows considerably more caution at this point, but the relationship to Origen's approach can be detected. Eusebius continues:

Ἐν μὲν τῷ πρὸ τούτου ψαλμῷ παρεῖχεν ἑαυτὸν ἐπιστρεπτικαῖς πληγαῖς, οἷά τις εὐγνώμων μαθητῆς διδασκάλῳ διὸ ἔλεγεν· Ἐγὼ εἰς μάστιγας ἔτοιμος. Ἐπεὶ δὲ λοιπὸν αὐτάρκως τῶν μαστιγῶν ἐπεπειρᾶτο ἐπιμόνως αὐτὸν αἰκίζομένων, ἰκετεύει τοῦ λοιποῦ παύσθαι, καὶ μέχρι τούτου στήναι τὰς μάστιγας, ὁμολογεῖ τε ἐξῆς λέγων· Ἀπὸ τῆς ἰσχύος χειρός σου ἐγὼ ἐξέλιπον...Εἶτα διδάσκει, ὅτι μὴ μάτην ἢ χεὶρ ἐπαίδευε, μηδὲ εἰς ἀργὸν ἐμαστίγου, ἀλλ' ἐπ' ὠφελείᾳ τοῦ ἡμαρτηκότος· διὸ φησιν· Ἐν ἐλεγμοῖς ὑπὲρ ἀνομίας ἐπαίδευσας ἄνθρωπον...Διὸ, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ Κυρίου, ἢ σὰρξ παραδέδοται εἰς ὄλεθρον· ἥς τιμωρουμένης, ἐκτίκεται ψυχὴ ἐξιχνουμένη δίκην ἀράχνης· διὸ φησι· Καὶ ἐξέτηξας ὡς ἀράχνην τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ...¹⁰

Eusebius's emphasis on the educational aspect of the punishment should be noted: sinners are to yield themselves to God, as a good disciple yields himself to the punitive discipline of his master. This reveals the influence of Origen, who viewed penance as part of the discipline necessary to bring Christians to Heaven.¹¹ Also, the strong emphasis on the remedial character of this punishment is important: it is for profit (ὠφελεία) to the sinner. Eusebius's description of the punishment at μάστιγας

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 349-50.

¹¹It is with good reason that Hal Koch's book on Origen's understanding of God's dealings with Christians is called *Pronoia und Paideusis*; cf. preceding chapter of this thesis.

is noteworthy; this is the same term used by Origen in his description of the penitential procedure¹²; it is echoed by Basil (cf. above). In spite of the similarities to the Alexandrian writer, there is one marked difference, and that is in Eusebius's caution in applying this text without reservation to the penitential procedure of the Church of his day. His use of the term ἐξομολόγησις, as we have seen, almost certainly demonstrates that he is thinking along these lines, but he is less willing than Origen to identify the psalm completely with penance.

Eusebius refers to I Corinthians 5 in fragments of a surviving commentary on Ps. 100 (LXX). In v. 8, in which the Psalmist vows to destroy all sinners from the earth, in order to rid the city of the Lord from workers of iniquity, Eusebius interprets the city of God as the Church and refers to the necessity of purifying it, debarring sinners from entering it (in the sense of full participation). He then cites I Cor. 5:6 (μικρὰ ζύμη...) and 5:13 (Ἐξάιρετε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν), which in this context would seem to imply excommunication.¹³ If this is the case, it demonstrates that he, like Origen, views excommunication as taking the place of the Old Testament imposition of death (either by the death penalty, or by death inflicted in battle on the enemies of the Lord). Whereas the previous reference shows his approach to the Corinthian text from the point of view of the penitent, this passage demonstrates his views as a leader of the Church, who must be concerned about its purity.

3. AMPHILOCHIUS OF ICONIUM

There is a passing reference to the Corinthian text by the contemporary of the Cappadocians, Amphilochius of Iconium (who died c. 395), in his homily *De natalitia Domini*. In his introduction, he compares the birthday of Christ to a "spiritual and bright meadow". He says that on account of this day, Paradise was restored and the power of death was rendered futile, and then adds, δι' ἣν φθορᾶς δύναμις πεπάζεται

¹²e.g., in his commentary on Matthew, Tom. XVI, 21.

¹³Pitra, *Analecta Sacra* III, p. 483.

καὶ διαβόλου σέβας ὀλέθριον πέπανται.¹⁴ There is no commentary attached. The language certainly echoes I Cor. 5:5, but it reveals nothing of his understanding of the Corinthian text.

4. EPIPHANIUS OF SALAMIS

Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis (who died in 403), refers twice to I Cor. 5:3-5 in his vast *Panarion*.

1. In 59, 4, Epiphanius insists that priests of the Church should not be bigamists; a twice-married priest should set aside a second wife, but when he does so, the Church should have mercy on him, particularly if he is a good citizen [of the Kingdom of God] in other matters. He cites I Tim. 5:14, which contains an exhortation for younger widows to marry again--but only after their husbands have died. Epiphanius then continues:

...οὐδὲ πάλιν ἔλεγε τῷ ἀνδρὶ τῷ τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχοντι καὶ παραδοθέντι τῷ σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου--οὐκ ἔλεγε πάλιν κυρώσατε εἰς αὐτὸν ἀγάπην, ἵνα μὴ τῇ περισσοτέρᾳ λύπῃ καταποθῇ ὁ τοιοῦτος.¹⁵

The final reference is to II Cor. 2:7; Epiphanius cites v. 8 as well to prove his point. His identification of the penitent man of II Corinthians 2 with the offender of I Corinthians 5 agrees with Origen, whose thinking he detested. His argument here indicates that he may believe that that man in Corinth had actually contracted a marriage with the γυναῖκα τοῦ πατρός, which was to be dissolved. It is not clear whether the Church's mercy to a twice-married priest is to be seen in allowing the man to remain in the priesthood, or only in allowing him to remain within the fellowship of the Church.

¹⁴ *Amphilochii Iconiensis Opera*, p. 5.

¹⁵ *Epiphanius II (GCS)*, p. 369.

2. In 66, 86 of the same work, Epiphanius is attacking the dualistic doctrines of the Manichaeans. He cites Mani as affirming that the Corinthian text proves the destruction of the flesh (which Mani would have regarded as evil), but the salvation of the spirit (vv. 1-5 are cited fully by Mani); Epiphanius counters this argument by asking how, then, there can be a resurrection of the body or the flesh. He then cites Paul's list of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19) and asserts that if anyone abandons these and gains ἐγκρατεία instead, then σὰρξ is converted into πνεῦμα. He continues:

...ὥς καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος λέγει ὅτι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς συζευξας τὰ ἀμφοτέρω εἶπεν, ἀντὶ τούτου καταλείψει ἄνθρωπος τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ, καὶ κολληθήσεται τῇ γυναικὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν [Επη. 5:31]· ὥς ὁ κολλώμενος τῇ πόρνῃ ἐν σῶμά ἐστι καὶ ὁ κολλώμενος τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν πνεύμα ἐστίν [I Χορ. 6:16, 18]. ἄρα οὖν ὁ τὴν πορνείαν ἐργαζόμενος σὰρξ γεγένηται· οὐ μόνον αὐτὴ ἡ σὰρξ, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντα, καὶ ψυχὴ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα, σὰρξ γεγένηται. κολληθεὶς γὰρ τῇ πόρνῃ σὰρξ ἐγένετο, καὶ ὢν σαρκικὸς σὰρξ ὅλως καλεῖται.¹⁶

Epiphanius then counters Mani's objection, how a part of the man can be surrendered without surrendering the whole. The bishop responds:

οὐ γὰρ εἶπε παραδοθῆναι τῷ σατανᾷ, ἀλλὰ παραδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον, ὁλοσχερῇ ἄνθρωπον σὺν ψυχῇ καὶ παντὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ παραδέδωκεν. εἰ δὲ ὅλον παραδέδωκεν, ὅλον σάρκα ἀπεφάνετο· τὸ πνεῦμα δὲ ἐδήλου σῶζεσθαι εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν κυρίου, ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ αἰτίαν γένηται ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ σφαλέντος ἀνθρώπου καὶ μολυνθῇ ὅλη ἡ ἐκκλησία τῷ παραπτώματι τοῦ ἐνός· διὸ λέγει παράδοτε τὸν σφαλέντα, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα, τουτέστιν ὅλη ἡ ἐκκλησία, σωθῇ.¹⁷

¹⁶Epiphanius III (GCS), p. 129.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 130.

This passage is remarkable for its final line: Epiphanius identifies the spirit which is to be saved with the Church. It is evident that he believes excommunication to be necessary for such a serious sin, so that the Church will not become ensnared; at first glimpse, he sounds as if the excommunication is to be final. However, the preceding passage should be noted; if the offender's "flesh" is converted so that it becomes "spirit", then there will be no difficulty in restoring the offender to the fellowship of the Church; this is also in agreement with the first passage from Epiphanius cited above, in which we see that he identifies the offenders of I Corinthians 5 and II Corinthians 2, and, consequently, holds to the possibility of forgiveness and restoration, even for serious sins.

This passage, interesting in itself, will become even more important when we see in later chapters of this thesis that Jerome and Ambrosiaster (particularly the latter) follow the same light of thought. This, of course, raises afresh the old questions about Ambrosiaster, as to whether he is of Greek origin or was even acquainted with Greek, or with Greek writers.

3. In addition to the citations above, Epiphanius refers several times to I Cor. 5:7b. All occur in the *Panarion*. Three of them (33,5;¹⁸ 33,6;¹⁹ 75,3²⁰) are typological; Christ has fulfilled the law and rituals of the Jews. The other two (42,11;²¹ 42,12²²) are directed against Marcion; Epiphanius shows that it is *Christ*, not just the earthly *Jesus*, who has been crucified. None of these references add anything further to our knowledge of Epiphanius's exegesis of I Corinthians 5:3-5.

¹⁸*PG* XLI, 565-6.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰*Epiphanius* III (*GCS*), p. 335.

²¹*Epiphanius* II (*GCS*), p. 121.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 161.

In conclusion, Epiphanius is the most original of the writers examined in this appendix, although the *De recta in Deum fide* provides considerable interest in its highlighting of certain points in the Corinthian text which were highlighted in the struggle with Marcion and his followers. While Epiphanius's remarks concerning bigamous priests are the most illustrative of his practice as a devout Churchman, his arguments against the Manichaean stance show him at his most creative, as he comes to terms with this difficult text. Eusebius is characterised by a strong Origenistic flavour, although he is more cautious than his Alexandrian predecessor. Amphilochius is so brief in his reference to the Corinthian text that we can say nothing of his exegesis of it.

Chapter 4

THE LATER EGYPTIANS FROM DIONYSIUS TO CYRIL

This chapter will cover the writings of the Egyptians from Dionysius of Alexandria (d. 265) to Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444). This is a large time span to fit into one chapter, but as will be seen, the usage of I Corinthians 5 by these writers is sparse. Origen's vast output concerning the text has been noted; in this chapter, the situation is reversed. This was the age of the great Trinitarian and Christological controversies, and the two most noted figures in this chapter, Athanasius and Cyril, are much more remembered for their contributions in those areas than for their exegetical and practical works. The writers to be studied in this chapter are Dionysius, Athanasius, Didymus the Blind, two of the monastic writers, and Cyril. Of these, Didymus is the one remembered chiefly as an exegete, and it will be seen that he is a figure who makes an interesting contribution to the history of the exegesis of this text.

I. DIONYSIUS OF ALEXANDRIA

Dionysius has one reference to I Cor. 5:3 in a letter cited at length by Eusebius in his *Church History*. In Book VII, chapter XI, 12, we find Dionysius in exile in Cephro (in Libya) and forbidden to hold open assemblies. Dionysius says:

Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ τῆς αἰσθητῆς ἡμεῖς μετὰ τοῦ κυρίου
 συναγωγῆς ἀπέστημεν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς μὲν ἐν τῇ πόλει
 σπουδαιότερον συνεκρότουν ὡς συνών, ἀπὸν μὲν
 τῷ σώματι, ὡς εἶπεν, παρὼν δὲ τῷ πνεύματι.¹

How Dionysius was present in spirit if not in body, he does not specify. He may be referring to letters, addressed to those who remain in Alexandria. Morize thinks that this is the case, noticing that Dionysius, like Cyprian, directed his church from a distance. Since he then mentions Dionysius's correspondence, he presumably sees

¹Feltoe, *The Letters and Other Remains of Dionysius of Alexandria*, p. 33.

letters as the means of the bishop's supervision of his distant see.² Dionysius differentiates his followers who remain in Alexandria from those who have joined him in Cephro (whom he describes as a "large congregation"), following him from the city. He does not seem to be referring to any dramatic manifestation of supernatural power, which is what Paul seems to infer, and which Origen confidently asserts to be Paul's meaning; he says that it was the same type of event we see when Elisha stood by Gehazi in spirit.³ Dionysius, however, says nothing of this sort. However, he may indicate that a bishop has the power to preside even when he is absent from the ecclesial body, and if this is the case, then he approaches Paul's meaning at this point, although he makes no greater claims of apostolic power than that at this point; on the other hand, Dionysius may be using the term in an informal sense, such as is done today. While this is a possibility, the former position is more in keeping with the context. The only other references to I Cor. 5 in the writings of Dionysius are: 1) his use of ἐορτάσωμεν⁴ (cf. I Cor. 5:8) in mentioning a future celebration of Easter, and 2) in his defence of re-baptising heretics, a statement that they are thus cleansed from the "old leaven" (I Cor. 5:7-8).⁵ This is important in that it shows that Dionysius is thinking of an individual, personal cleansing. He also applies it, not to persons who have been members of the Church and then excommunicated (although that might well be the case with some of them), but to those making their entrance into the Church. The old leaven is the heresy of their pre-Catholic (and to Dionysius, pre-Christian) days.

²Morize, *Denys d'Alexandrie*, p. 77.

³cf. *Catena* on I Cor. 5.

⁴Eusebius, *Church History* VII, XXIII, 4; Feltoe, p. 78.

⁵*Ibid.*, VII, V, 5; Feltoe, p. 50.

II. ATHANASIUS

In spite of his great output, Athanasius rarely treats I Cor. 5:3-5. In fact, he has only one reference to v. 4, which occurs in the *Epistula ad episcopos encyclica*, which Quasten notes is the earliest polemical treatise of Athanasius.⁶ The bishop is calling for all Catholic bishops to unite with him against the intrusion of the Arian bishop Gregory, who is now in the see of Alexandria. Athanasius protests that, even if there had been an outcry against him, he should not have been superseded by an Arian bishop, but tried

κατὰ δὲ τοὺς ἐκκλησιαστικοὺς κανόνας, καὶ κατὰ
τὸ τοῦ Παύλου ῥῆμα, συναχθέντων τῶν λαῶν, καὶ
τοῦ Πνεύματος τῶν καθιστανόντων, συν τῇ
δυνάμει τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, πάντα
κανονικῶς ἐξετασθῆναι τε καὶ πραχθῆναι,
παρόντων τῶν αἰτουμένων λαῶν καὶ κληρικῶν...

Athanasius says that the manner in which things were conducted destroys all the ecclesiastical canons and elicits blasphemy from the heathen, who may think that episcopal appointments are made, not according to θεῖον θεσμόν, but by patronage and the power of the state.⁷

This passage has several points of interest. First is the fact that Athanasius cites the Corinthian passage in a disciplinary context, thus showing an understanding of its original juridical tone; Athanasius says that any complaint against him should have been handled in that fashion rather than as it actually happened. Second, the unusual phraseology, τοῦ Πνεύματος τῶν καθιστανόντων, should be noted. In the original passage, it is Paul's spirit which will be present with the power of the Lord Jesus; here it is the spirit of the leaders, i.e., the ones who do the ordaining. Athanasius does not specify here, but it most probably refers to the presbyters, since Jerome (*Epistle CXLVI*) notes that the presbyters in Alexandria until the time of

⁶Quasten, *Patrology* III, p. 56.

⁷PG XXV, 225-8.

Dionysius chose one of their number to be bishop, but Kidd, citing other sources, thinks that this situation may have lasted until the time of Athanasius.⁸ On the other hand, Athanasius could be referring to other bishops who would be his judges. "The spirit of the ordaining persons" is odd both in English and in the original Greek, and it seems likely that Athanasius is thinking of the Holy Spirit, whom he views as present with the ones in charge of ordination, but this is not certain. Also, the situation here is a trial, not ordination; this is one of the unusual twists in Athanasius's handling of the Corinthian text. He is aware that the original passage was disciplinary, but here he applies it to the trial of bishops, a considerably different context from the situation which Paul addressed. The terseness of the Greek here makes it difficult to discern Athanasius's meaning fully. Third, the deference of Athanasius to the canons should be noted *en passant*; he understands it to be a definite possibility that a bishop may be deposed canonically when it is necessary. Fourth, Athanasius understands that the power which Paul exercised in I Cor. 5:4 is to some extent, at least, present in the Church of his time. The apostle addresses his words to the entire congregation at Corinth; Athanasius views the power as lying with those who ordain, but he firmly agrees that they have the power of expelling one who is unworthy. Thus, in the thinking of Athanasius, there is definite continuity between the apostolic church and the church of the fourth century. His use of I Cor. 5:4 here is supportive of tradition, which is very important to Athanasius, as it is to all of the early Christian writers. Newman has noted:

It is not [Athanasius's] aim ordinarily to *prove* doctrine by Scripture, nor does he appeal to the private judgment of the individual Christian in order to determine what Scripture means; but he assumes that there is a tradition, substantive, independent, and authoritative, such as to supply for us the true sense of Scripture in doctrinal matters—a tradition carried on from generation to

⁸Kidd, *A History of the Church to A.D. 461*, I, p. 382.

generation by the practice of catechising, and by the other ministrations of Holy Church.⁹

The passage above illustrates this; the canons are a tradition handed down from the apostles, and the Scriptures indicate not only what *should* be done, but what *has* been done through the generations.

I Cor. 5:7 figures far more prominently in the writings of Athanasius than vv. 1-5. It comes as no surprise that many of these occur in his *Festal Letters* concerning the date of the Easter festival; since "Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed for us" (I Cor. 5:7), it is very natural for Athanasius to cite this passage in the Easter context. In three of these letters (II, XIV, and XLII), Athanasius merely refers to the verse *en passant*;¹⁰ in three others (I, X, and XIX), Athanasius cites this to contrast Christianity and Judaism; this is a reminder of the strong Jewish community in Alexandria. Robert L. Wilken has noted that its presence strongly influenced the thinking and writing of the Alexandrian community.¹¹ In the first of these references, Athanasius contrasts the silver trumpets of Num. 10:1 with the trumpet calls to spiritual warfare (Eph. 6), virginity (I Cor. 7), etc., noting Paul's "trumpet blast" that Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed. In this particular passage, Athanasius includes a portion of v. 8 immediately following ("Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, or with the leaven of malice and wickedness").¹² In the second reference, Athanasius berates the Arians as being Jewish-minded; he then contrasts the symbolism of the passover in Exodus with its fulfilment in Christ (citing I Cor. 5:7b).¹³ In the third reference, Athanasius once again contrasts the Jewish trumpets with the trumpet blast of the gospel proclaimed by Paul, that Christ, our passover, is

⁹Newman, *Select Treatises of St. Athanasius*, II, p. 250.

¹⁰PG XXVI, 1371-2; 1419-20; 1439-40.

¹¹Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind*, pp. 42-53.

¹²PG XXVI, 1362.

¹³*Ibid.*, 1402.

sacrificed for us.¹⁴ The final reference by Athanasius to I Cor. 5:7 occurs in his Festal Letter VI, and it also includes v. 8 of the Corinthian text. Here he comes nearer to the original Pauline context. Athanasius is exhorting his audience to Christian behaviour; they should no longer do the deeds of death, for we are not to keep the Easter feast with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (I Cor. 5:8). He then adds that it is not a matter of rigor about certain days, but Christians observe the Easter festival for the Lord's sake; he concludes by referring to I Cor. 5:7b ("Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us").¹⁵

These references show Athanasius's concern that his flock keep the Easter feast in proper order, which includes purity of life; they also show Athanasius's way of exegeting the Scriptures when refuting the Jewish interpretation. Bertrand de Margérie has shown that Athanasius opts for a typological exegesis when refuting the Jews; he notes that this is particularly apparent in the *Festal Letters*,¹⁶ and the truth of this statement is seen in the preceding paragraph of this chapter. De Margérie notes that, when opposing the Arians, Athanasius is more prone to use a literal exegesis.¹⁷ The truth of this has also been seen in this chapter, in Athanasius's use of I Cor. 5:4 to show that the installation of Gregory has been against all ecclesiastical precedent. The references in Festal Letters I and VI to v. 8 of the Corinthian passage indicate a personal, spiritual application to the text, as opposed to the congregational application, by which a congregation would be urged to expel a flagrant offender. Thus, at this point Athanasius is opting for the "inner" approach to the text which we have already noted in Tertullian and Origen and which is very important to Augustine during the Donatist controversy (cf. below); de Margérie has noted that, even when refuting the

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 1424.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 1384.

¹⁶de Margérie, *Les Pères grecs et orientaux (Introduction à l'Histoire de l'Exégèse I)*, p. 144.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 138.

Arians or the Jews, Athanasius sometimes develops a spiritual or monastic exegesis.¹⁸ His usage of v. 8 is an illustration of this.

One other reference to I Cor. 5 occurs in the Athanasian corpus; strictly speaking, it is not his reference, since it is found in the encyclical letter of the Council of Egypt, which comprises chapter 1 of the *Apologia contra Arianos*. However, Athanasius must have approved of the letter, or he would not have included it in this work. The passage in question shows the support of the council for Athanasius and decries the behaviour of Eusebius of Nicomedia. The letter continues, ὑμᾶς γὰρ ἐκδίκους κατὰ τῆς τοιαύτης ἀδικίας ἐπικαλούμεθα, ὑπομιμνήσκοντες τὸ ἀποστολικόν· Ἐξάρατε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν.¹⁹

It is clear that I Cor. 5:13 is being used here in its literal sense; the letter is recommending that Eusebius of Nicomedia be deposed. The Corinthian text is thus functioning in a disciplinary context, which was its original setting. This again illustrates the truth of de Margérie's observation that Athanasius tends to use a literal exegesis when he is battling the Arians.²⁰ What makes this passage particularly interesting is that it concerns the deposition (and excommunication) of a bishop by the entire Church. This is a complete reversal of the original situation, in which the spiritual leader urges the congregation to expel an grievous offender. Since the writer is aware of the disciplinary character of the text, he is willing to cite it for support, even when the details do not fully dovetail.

Athanasius has one other reference which may give light on his understanding of I Cor. 5:3-5. In his fourth epistle to Serapion of Thmuis, the Alexandrian bishop cites II Cor. 2:8. He says:

Ἄλλως τε, εἰ τῶν μετὰ τὸ λουτρὸν ἁμαρτανόντων
χάριν εἴρηται τοῦτο τὸ ῥητόν, καὶ τοῦτοις

¹⁸de Margérie, *op. cit.*, p. 149ff.

¹⁹PG XXV, 279-80.

²⁰de Margérie, *op. cit.*, p. 138ff.

ἀσύγγνωστός ἐστιν ἡ τῶν πλημμελημάτων δίκη·
 πῶς τῷ μὲν ἐν Κορίνθῳ μετανοοῦντι κυροῖ τὴν
 αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ὁ Ἀπόστολος, τοὺς δὲ Γαλάτας
 παλινδρομήσαντας ὠδίνει, ἄχρις οὗ πάλιν μορφωθῇ
 Χριστὸς ἐν αὐτοῖς; Ἐν δὲ τῷ λέγειν, πάλιν,
 δείκνυσιν αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν προτέραν ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι
 τελειότητα.²¹

Here we see the probable identification of the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2, an identification made by Origen and accepted by the great majority of the writers studied in this thesis. It is clear that Athanasius thinks that there is forgiveness available for those who have sinned after baptism, even for those whose sin is of a serious nature. This is confirmed by a surviving fragment of a sermon of Athanasius on the sin of Simon Magus (Acts 4:9-24).²² Noting that Peter told Simon to repent, εἰ ἄρα ἀφεθήσεταιί σοι ἡ ἐπίνοια τῆς καρδίας σου, Athanasius notes that Peter did not regard any of Simon's wickedness as incurable (ἀνίαντον) by the medicine of repentance (μετανοίας φαρμάκῳ), but as curable (θεραπευτικά). Like Gregory of Nazianzus (cf. preceding chapter), Athanasius says that the disorders [of sin following baptism] are hard to cure, but that a cure is possible. Peter's εἰ ἄρα indicates the difficulty of obtaining this forgiveness, but in no way calls the possibility of the forgiveness into doubt. Peter's counsel to Simon is to show those who are burdened with sin that there is need of much penitence and attention, but that the forgiveness is still there.

This fragment is noteworthy in that it uses the word φαρμάκῳ, thus anchoring it firmly in the Origenistic tradition of penance as medicinal. It has been seen that this idea is strongly rooted in the thinking of the Cappadocian fathers as well. Bernhard Poschmann has noted that penance in the Greek church has been characterised strongly by this medicinal way of understanding.²³

²¹PG XXVI, 653-4.

²²Ibid., 1317.

²³Poschmann, *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick*, p. 65.

In summary, we may say that Athanasius's references to I Cor. 5, though sparse, give some fascinating glimpses into his exegetical method, and the citations of the Corinthian passage are sufficient for us to learn something of his thinking here. De Margérie's valuable observation on the difference of approach in Athanasius's exegesis, depending on his opponent, is amply borne out by the passages examined above. We see that he understood that the basic context of the Corinthian passage was a disciplinary one, and his most direct references to the text bear this in mind, and it is certain that he is in favour of excommunication of serious offenders. By the same token, he sees penance as remedial and medicinal, with restoration to the fellowship of the Church as its final aim. He is not averse to a spiritualising, personalised approach to "cleansing out the old leaven" when he is writing to his flock, reminding us that he is concerned with the pastoral care of the Alexandrian church, and that his desire is that they walk in obedience to Christ. Von Campenhausen has noted that, "...even as a theologian, he remained the bishop."²⁴ Concerning this spiritualising approach to Scripture, Quasten notes (with reference to the surviving fragments of Athanasius's commentary on the Psalms) that, "...it is evident that Athanasius had a predilection for the allegorical and typological interpretation of the Psalter in contradistinction to the more jejune exegesis predominant in dogmatico-polemical writings...".²⁵ His appointment of Didymus the Blind to be head of the Catechetical School probably reflects Athanasius's preference for this method, since Didymus was a champion of Origen, and Athanasius would certainly have been aware of the type of teaching espoused by Didymus. Meijering has noted that, "Athanasius does not acknowledge his differences with Origen," being convinced that Origen could not have been a proponent of a sub-Nicaean theology.²⁶ For him, the fathers of the church

²⁴von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Greek Church*, p. 81.

²⁵Quasten, *Patrology* III, p. 38.

²⁶Meijering, *Orthodoxy and Platonism in Athanasius: Synthesis or Antithesis?*, p. 129.

(including his own) would all be in agreement. We have seen in his treatment of I Cor. 5:4 that he is a strong defender of tradition, and Origen was a very important part of this tradition. Thus, he would have no hesitation in appointing a devout Origenist to be the head of the Catechetical School.

III. DIDYMUS THE BLIND

The surviving fragments of this writer's work were greatly increased in number by the important find at Toura in 1940; these include some references to the Corinthian text. In addition to these, there is an important passage from Didymus's commentary on the Psalms to be examined, as well as the surviving fragments of his commentary on II Corinthians 2:10-11, which, as will be seen, have a bearing on discovering his understanding of I Cor. 5:3-5; it is with these fragments that I will begin.

A. In II Cor. 2:10-11, St. Paul says, καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ὁ κεχάρισμαι (εἴ τι κεχάρισμαι) δι' ὑμᾶς ἐν προσώπῳ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα μὴ πλεονεκτηθῶμεν ὑπὸ τοῦ Σατανᾶ· οὐ γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὰ νοήματα ἀγνοοῦμεν. Didymus notes the double snare which Satan has placed before the Corinthians: at first, they compromised with the sin of the one who has since repented (συνεχώρησα τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τῷ μετανοήσαντι), but now, their lack of compassion is enabling Satan to compound the injury the man has sustained. The Greek text (which is difficult to render into satisfactory English) reads:

οὐκ ἀγνοεῖν γὰρ τοῦ σατανᾶ τὰ πανουργεύματα
 δεῖ, ὥς πάλαι τῆς πορνείας γινομένης αὐξάνειν τὴν
 βλάβην θέλων παρεσκεύαζε τὸ ἀσυμπαθές, ὥς μὴ
 πενθεῖσθαι τὸν ἐαλωκότα τῇ κακίᾳ· νῦν δὲ ἔπεισεν
 ἀσπλαγχνίαν εἶναι πρὸς τὸν παυσάμενον τοῦ
 κακοῦ...²⁷

Didymus's reference to the sinner's offence as πορνεία almost certainly ties his treatment of II Cor. 2 in with the offence of I Cor. 5, showing his identification of the

²⁷Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, p. 19.

offender in the two passages. This, of course, was Origen's stance, and we see Didymus following in the footsteps of his master here. The devil's snare here is to keep the offender from doing penance, once he has fallen into sin, and the harshness of the Corinthian congregation would bring about that result if they do not pay heed to what Paul has said.

B. A large number of fragments have survived from Didymus's commentary on the Psalms. Quasten has noted that they give us an impression of his "allegorico-mystical method of exegesis, which proves him a true follower of Origen."²⁸ One passage which has survived from Didymus's commentary on the Psalms treats Ps. 9:5 (LXX):

Ἐπιτίμησας ἔθνεσιν, καὶ ἀπώλετο ὁ ἀσεβής, ταύτην ἔχει τὴν διανοίαν· Διὰ τῶν ἱερῶν ἀποστόλων, καὶ τῶν μετ' ἐκείνους τῶν τῆς ἀληθείας κηρύκων, προσήνεγκεν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν τὰ θεῖα διδάγματα· ἐκείνων δὲ δεξαμένων, καὶ τῆς πλάνης ἀπαλλαγέντων, ἀπώλετο ἀσεβής, τοὺς ἀπατωμένους καὶ προσκυνοῦντας οὐκ ἔχων. Οὕτω Βαρνάβας καὶ Παῦλος θῦσαι πειραθεῖσι Λυκάοσιν ἐπετίμησαν βοῶντες· τί ποιεῖτε, ἄνδρες; Καὶ ἡμεῖς ὁμοιοπαθεῖς ὑμῖν, ἐσμεν ἄνθρωποι, ἀπὸ τούτων τῶν ματαίων πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑμᾶς ἐπιστρέφοντες. Οὕτω Γαλάταις ὁ μακάριος ἐπετίμησεν Παῦλος βοῶν· Ὡ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβασκάνεν, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος; Οὕτω Κορινθίοις· Ὅλως ἀκούεται ἐν ὑμῖν πορνεία, ἥτις οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὀνομάζεται; --- Ἐπιτίμησας τοίνυν ἔθνεσιν, καὶ ἀπώλετο ὁ ἀσεβής, τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐξήλειψας εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος. Ἐσβέσθησαν γὰρ παντελῶς αἱ τελεταί, καὶ λήθη παντελεῖ παρεδόθησαν ὥς μηδένα τῶν νῦν ἀνθρώπων εἰδέναι καὶ τῆς ἀσεβείας μυστήρια.²⁹

This remarkable passage reveals much about Didymus's exegetical technique. It clearly reveals his strongly Origenist bent. Philip Sellew has remarked:

²⁸Quasten, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

²⁹*PG* XXXIX, 1189-90.

Throughout his career as a monk, scholar, teacher, and exegete, Didymus remained constant to the Origenist principles of biblical interpretation: always to seek the spiritual and theological implications of the text, not necessarily discarding the literal or surface meaning, but probing more deeply for what he called the "anagogical" and "allegorical" intention beneath the bare "historical" statements. Didymus was quite prepared, moreover, to reinterpret the literal sense of a passage quite dramatically to reach that deeper level, especially if its surface meaning conflicted with his general theological assumptions and principles.³⁰

Didymus's love of exploring the various senses of Scripture will be clearly seen below, in the citations from his commentary on Ecclesiastes. Bart D. Ehrman has noted that, "...Didymus makes it clear that for him, the goal of exegesis is not the literal elucidation of the Scriptures, but rather the uncovering of the divine mysteries hidden within the text..."³¹ The passage cited above illustrates this. Didymus is concerned to show how the Old Testament presages the time of Christ, and Ps. 9:5 prophesies of the demise of idolatry. As to the connection of the Corinthian text with the current passage, Didymus is thinking in terms of rebuke. Since the nations in the psalm "perished", one might think that Didymus is thinking of a capital penalty to be imposed on the offender in Corinth, but the other passages all refer to a rebuke with amendment, not destruction, in mind. The Lycaonians are to be won to Christianity; the Galatians are to return to the theology of grace; therefore it is probable that Didymus means that the rebuke addressed to Corinth was to bring to its senses not only the congregation, but also the offender. This is certainly in agreement with what has been seen to be Didymus's attitude in the fragments of his commentary on II Corinthians 2. Since Didymus identifies the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent

³⁰Sellew, "Achilles or Christ? Porphyry and Didymus in debate over allegorical interpretation", pp. 82-3.

³¹Ehrman, "The New Testament Canon of Didymus the Blind", p. 3.

man in II Cor. 2, he will see the punishment involved as bringing the sinner to amendment.

This passage is important for another reason: as will be seen in the next chapter, it was copied almost *verbatim* by Theodoret of Cyrillus, who evidently viewed Didymus as having the best approach to this text.

C. The next passages to be examined come from the commentary on Ecclesiastes, one of the Toura discoveries.

1. In his treatment of Eccl. 3:2b ("[There is] a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted"), Didymus explains the "ecclesiastical" meaning of this phrase (he has already examined its "spiritual" meaning). He cites I Cor. 5:1 and 13, as well as II Cor. 2:8 in his discussion.

[...]ὁ ἄποσ[τολο]ς βούλεται τῆς ἐκκλη[ησίας] ἐκβάλλεται τοὺς φαύλους ἀνθρώπους. λέγει γοῦν· [ἐξάρατε πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν. καὶ ὁ σωτὴρ μετ' αἰνιγμοῦ] καὶ παραβολῆς λέγει· [εἰ] ἡ χεὶρ σου ἢ δεξιὰ σκανδαλίζει σε [ἢ ὁ ὀφθαλμός, ἔξελε καὶ βάλε ἀπὸ σοῦ. ἰδοὺ καιρὸς τοῦ ἐκτίλαι τὸ πεφυτευμένον. [καὶ] ἐπεὶ πάντως ἀρθέντος τοῦ πονηροῦ ἐκ τῆς πληθύος τῶν Χριστιανῶν καρποφορεῖ ἡ ἐκκλησία, καιρὸς γίνεται τοῦ φυτεύειν καὶ καρποφορεῖν. αὐτίκα γοῦν καὶ ὁ τὴν μη[τρ]υῖαν γυναῖκα ἔχων ἐν τῇ Κορίνθῳ τότε ἐξεκόπη καὶ ἀπεβλήθη· καὶ μετενόησεν· ὅτε γράφει ὁ Παῦλος κυρωθῆναι εἰς αὐτὸν ἀγάπην, καιρὸν ἔλαβεν τοῦ φυ[τευ]θῆναι.³²

This passage again shows the identification of the Corinthian offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2. It is also quite clear that Didymus is in favour of the excommunication of serious offenders, with a view to their future restoration.

2. A similar idea surfaces in Didymus's comments on Eccl. 3:7a ("[there is] a time to rend, and a time to sew"). He says that the time to rend is when, ὁ φίλος προθέμενος εἰς ἁμαρτίαν ἦ,] παραιτητέ[ο]ν αὐτόν· καὶ πάλιν διὸ ἐξέ[λ]θετε ἐκ

³²Didymos der Blinde: Kommentar zum Ecclesiastes II, pp. 22-3.

μέσου αὐτῶν καὶ ἀφορίσθητε...This rending, says Didymus, particularly pertains to those who are injuring (βλάπτοντας) the Church; it is the "time to rend".³³ This same approach to Eccl. 3:7 is taken by Gregory of Nyssa (cf. preceding chapter) in his seventh homily on Ecclesiastes.³⁴

3. Didymus is less thorough in another passage treating Eccl. 3:5a ("[There is] a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together"), but his views are still clear. He says that, according to the historical sense, the Church is the builder of the house (presumably the Temple of God), and that diseased stones must not be used; when such are found, they must be thrown out. He cites I Cor. 5:13 (ἐξάρατε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν) for support. Thus, the Church should be free from flagrant sinners.

4. Another vivid illustration of Didymus's exegetical approach occurs in his comments on Eccl. 12:3 ("Remember also your Creator...before the sun and...the moon...are darkened...; in the day when the keepers of the house tremble..."). He is addressing the question of whether the "house" refers to the Church or to the world. Rather than giving a direct answer, he notes that even the Church may be plagued with evils, citing as evidence I Cor. 5:13 (ἐξάρατε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν). He describes the offender as an ἀτιμίας σκεύη (Rom. 9:21) and then cites I Cor. 5:1, noting that Paul commands that such a one be thrown out (ἐκβάλλεται).³⁵

5. Didymus's only other reference to I Cor. 5 in his commentary on Ecclesiastes occurs in his treatment of the beginning verses of the book. He discusses the question of whether the book is addressed to beginning Christians or πνευματικοί (he does not use the Greek word, but this is his meaning). Again, he does not give a simple answer, but notes instead that the Church may be called holy even when it

³³*Ibid.*, pp. 70-1.

³⁴*Gregorii Nysseni Opera* V, p. 408.

³⁵*Kommentar zum Ecclesiastes* VI, pp. 142-5.

seems to be unholy; he cites the salutation of I Cor. 1:4-5, in which Paul praises God for the spiritual riches of the Corinthian congregation, and then I Cor. 5:1, in which Paul excoriates them for allowing sin to continue unchecked in their midst.³⁶

This concludes Didymus's references to I Cor. 5; a remaining reference to II Cor. 2:7 in the surviving fragments of his commentary on Proverbs,³⁷ sheds no further light on his understanding of I Cor. 5:3-5.

As with Athanasius, the references to the Corinthian text by Didymus are relatively scarce, but it is still possible to see a portion of his thinking. Due perhaps to the scarcity of material, we are told nothing about the bishop's power or the ecclesiastical procedure of Didymus's day. However, he makes it very clear that he views the punishment invoked by Paul on the Corinthian offender as involving excommunication at the very least; like Origen, and like the Cappadocians, he does not commit himself further as to whether there were other unpleasant occurrences to be expected from such a punishment. Like Origen and the Cappadocians, he definitely views the punishment as remedial and restorative; what Paul did was to bring the offender to his senses. Didymus sees the excommunication as important both for the Church (in addressing the problem of sin, rather than ignoring it) and for the offender (in his recall to an obedient life).

IV. THE EGYPTIAN MONKS

Only two of the Egyptian monastic writers, Horsiesi and Isidore of Pelusium, refer to I Cor. 5 in their surviving works, but here is also a fragment in the surviving Pachomiana which will be examined first.

A. The first Draguet fragment³⁸ tells of how Pachomius expelled a monk from the community for striking another monk; an old and godly monk then stated that he

³⁶*Ibid.*, I.1, pp. 32-3.

³⁷*PG XXXIX*, 1625-6.

³⁸Published by R. Draguet, 1957.

himself was also a sinner and began to leave with the expelled monk. All the other monks, admitting their sinfulness, joined in the exodus from the community. At this point, Pachomius begged their forgiveness, and they retired to the church for prayer. Pachomius came to the conclusion: "If the murderers, the sorcerers, the adulterers, and others, having committed all kinds of evil, flee to the monastery to be saved through penance, who am I to expel a brother from the monastery?" This event led to Pachomius's establishing this rule:

whatever the sin a brother has committed, he must not be expelled from the monastery, but [must be] corrected according to his sin, even by corporal punishment if he deserves it. This way he would not be abandoned into the hands of the devil and [the father] would not be reproached for the loss of a soul.³⁹

The allusion to I Corinthians 5 occurs in the final lines of the citation. What is noticeable first of all is that here penance (within a monastic setting) is described as an alternative to being handed over to Satan; the writers observed thus far in this thesis usually *equate* penance with being handed over to Satan. It is possible (and even probable) that Pachomius views a return to the (non-monastic) world as being handed over to Satan, and that for an expelled monk, there would be no other choice. If this is the view of Pachomius, then we see the idea of monasticism as the true Christianity; a desertion (or expulsion) from it is regarded as terrible backsliding, even a handing over to Satan, and Pachomius would be reproached for having lost a soul.

Like Basil, Pachomius views punishment and penance in horizontal terms; nothing is said (directly) about the monk's behaviour endangering his spiritual destiny by his loss of temper.⁴⁰ However, unlike Basil, Pachomius infers that the expulsion of

³⁹*Pachomian Koinonia* II, pp. 111-13.

⁴⁰Basil may well have believed that disobedience involved spiritual danger; however, in his treatment of

I Cor. 5 in a monastic context, he is more concerned with unity among the brothers and obedience to the superior.

the monk from the community would have a bearing on his ultimate destiny; in this Horsiesi agrees with him (cf. immediately below), although he is more explicit in his belief that sin (in a monastic setting) endangers the soul of the offender.

B. Horsiesi, the abbot of Pachomius's community after the latter's death (with one brief abbacy in between), has left a treatise which Jerome includes at the end of his version of the Rule of Pachomius, entitled *Doctrina de institutione monachorum*. In chapter 3 of that work, he says:

Igitur non nos vincat oblivio, nec patientiam Dei existimeamus ignorantiam, qui idcirco sustentat et differt, ut ad meliora conversi, cruciatibus non tradamur. Quando peccamus, non putemus Deum consentire nostris peccatis, quia non statim vindicat; sed illud cogitemus, quod cito exeuntes de saeculo separabimur in futuro a patribus et fratribus nostris, qui locum victoriae possident. Quem et nos habebimus, si illorum voluerimus calcare vestigia, et illud attendere, quod apostolus Paulus hic quoque sanctos a peccatoribus separat, et tradit delinquentes **in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus fiat**. Beatus homo qui timet Dominum, et quem corripit ut emendetur; et legem suam docet eum, ut ambulet in mandatis ejus omnibus diebus vitae suae; qui non murmurat pro peccato suo.⁴¹

The monastic setting of this passage reminds us of Basil, who, as has been seen, used the Corinthian text in the regulations for his monks. However, there are some differences. The most important one is that Horsiesi seems to be thinking that the punishment may affect the monk's eternal destiny if he does not amend his ways; Basil never ventures farther than the idea of the monk's being excluded from the monastic assembly—what might be described as a more "horizontal" way of using the Corinthian passage. Horsiesi, to the contrary, looks at it in a "vertical" fashion; a monk who has fallen into sin is in eternal danger. It should be noted, however, that Horsiesi evidently has in mind much more heinous sins than Basil does; the

⁴¹PG XL, 871.

Cappadocian writer is more interested, e.g., in breaking pride and false independence in his monastic community and does not mention the grosser sins in this context. It is clear that Horsiesi thinks that sin calls for an exclusion from the community; there must be a separation between saints and sinners. It should be noted, too, that Horsiesi says that the man is blessed who fears the Lord, and whom the Lord reproves *ut emendetur*. These words tell us that the Egyptian abbot sees the separation as remedial; he is firmly in agreement with Origen, Athanasius, and Didymus. He also implies that the surrendering to Satan should be used as a last resort; at this point, he is in agreement with Basil, his contemporary.

C. Isidore of Pelusium (d. 435) has two references to I Cor. 5; in Epistle 129 (Book IV), he is addressing the monk Strategius and is discussing I Cor. 6:18 ("Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body"). Isidore says that that the disease of πορνεία is the worst of all diseases, and notes that, Τὸν γὰρ πορνεύσαντα παρὰ Κορινθίοις σωφρονίσαι βουλόμενος, ταύτην ἔρρηξε τὴν φωνήν (a reference to I Cor. 6:18).⁴² Even in this brief reference, we note that Isidore says that Paul's desire was to correct (σωφρονίσαι) the offender. Presumably he sees restoration as the goal. Zincone has noted that Isidore identifies the Kingdom of God with the monastic life and exhorts his readers with insistence to the obedience of the commandments and the practice of virtue.⁴³ This may give point to the current passage, but there is nothing exclusively monastic about his application of I Cor. 6:18; instead, his words reflect the attitude of the Church of Alexandria (from Origen until Isidore's own time) toward sin and penance.

Isidore's other reference to be examined is probably an allusion to I Cor. 5:13, although he does not cite the verse *verbatim* (the reference to the situation in Corinth

⁴²PG LXXVIII, 1207-10.

⁴³Dizionario Patristico e di Antichità Cristiani II, 1834-5.

is clear, however). It occurs in a letter to the presbyter Heraclitus (Epistle 291). Isidore is exhorting him to be firm in chastising sin among his flock. In treating Ezek. 3:19 ("But if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you will have saved your life"), Isidore reminds Heraclitus of the Corinthian situation, saying,

Εἰ δὲ φαίης· Πῶς οὖν ὁ Παῦλος τὸν πεπορνευκότα
ἀπειρξε; μείζον ἢ ἐγὼ βούλομαι λέγεις· οὐ γὰρ
ἐτύπτησεν ἢ ὕβρισεν, ἀλλ' ἐχώρισε τῆς ἀγέλης, ἵνα
μὴ καὶ εἰς τὰ λοιπὰ πρόβατα τὸ λοιμῶδες διαδοθῇ
νόσημα.⁴⁴

Isidore's concern for the rest of the flock, lest they catch the plague, is reminiscent of Origen in the surviving fragments of his commentary on I Cor. 5, although the latter uses a different word (ψώρα) for the illness.⁴⁵ Isidore's reference to the situation in Corinth makes it clear that he views excommunication of such an offender to be essential.

Isidore's references to I Cor. 5 are too brief for much to be said about them; nevertheless, they show him standing in firm agreement with the other Egyptian writers. He believes that excommunication is essential for serious offenders, but that it has a remedial character. Both the passages examined here give a tantalising glimpse of his overall exegetical method: Quasten notes that Isidore favours the Antiochene approach to exegesis.⁴⁶ Certainly both these references show Isidore looking at the wider context of Scripture, rather than opting for a mere proof-texting approach. In the second reference, he refers to the Corinthian situation as a whole, and in the first reference, his treatment of the passage in I Cor. 6 is supported by I Cor. 5; this is representative of the expository approach favoured by John Chrysostom (cf.

⁴⁴PG LXXVIII, 1505-6.

⁴⁵cf. the *Catena* on I Cor. 5.

⁴⁶Quasten, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-3.

below), whom Isidore admired,⁴⁷ and it is particularly noteworthy when it is noted that this letter was not a running commentary on a book of the Bible.

V. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

The name of Cyril is inseparable from the Nestorian controversy; he is remembered chiefly for his contribution to the Christological discussions tied in with it. However, Robert Wilken has remarked that, "...before 428 the largest body of Cyril's writings by all standards is exegetical...In the present edition of Cyril's works in J.-P. Migne, seven out of ten volumes are devoted entirely to exegetical works."⁴⁸ He also notes, "No other Greek father, save Origen and Chrysostom, has passed on such a body of biblical commentaries..."⁴⁹ It is thus not surprising to find a commentary on I Corinthians in Cyril's output. I will treat his comments on chapter 5 of that epistle before examining his other references to the Corinthian text.

A. Cyril's treatment of I Cor. 5 is terse; he does not stop to wrestle with the difficulties of the text, but he makes a few general remarks and then moves on. He prefaces the comments on chapter 5 with a citation of I Cor. 4:21 ("What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?"). He then says:

Βούλεσθε, φησίν, σοφὴν ἐπίπληξιν οἷα τινὶ ράβδῳ ἐπαγάγω τοῖς ἡμαρτηκόσιν, ἢ ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος καὶ ὡς ἐν ἀγάπῃ προσενεχθεῖς παραδράμω σεσιγηκῶς; Ἀλλ' ἦν ἄμεινον αὐτοῖς ἢ ἐπίπληξις ἅμα κόπτουσα τὸ δεινὸν καὶ τὸ ῥάθυμον καὶ τῆς τοιαύτης παρανομίας τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν· περὶ ἧς καὶ ἡ θεόπνευστος ἔφη Γραφὴ περὶ τῶν ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ διὰ φωνῆς Ἰωήλ· Καὶ υἱὸς καὶ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ εἰσεπορεύοντο πρὸς τὴν αὐτὴν παιδίσκην, ὅπως βεβηλώσωσι τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ αὐτῶν. Ταύτην, φησί, τὴν πορνείαν οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἔστιν ἀκοῦσαι. Θησέα γὰρ ἡκηκόει που κατὰ τὸ

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 181.

⁴⁸Wilken, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 2.

εἰκὸς τεθηγμένον ἐπὶ τῷ ἰδίῳ παιδί, ἐπαρασάμενόν
 τε αὐτῷ, καὶ δὴ ἀπεκτονότα διαβεβλημένον ἐκ
 μητρυνῶς· καὶ ἑτέρους τινὰς ἐπὶ τοιοῖσδε αἰτιάμασι
 ταῖς τῶν ποιητῶν κατεσκωμμένους.⁵⁰

This is all that survives of Cyril's commentary on I Corinthians 5. Several things are obvious at once, such as the reference to the Minor Prophets (Cyril has "Joel", but the citation is actually from Amos 2:7). Cyril is the first writer examined in this thesis who has used this reference in relation to I Cor. 5. Another point of immediate interest is the reference to Greek mythology (Theseus) for an illustration of his point. Cyril's understanding of the two options which Paul offers the Corinthians should also be noted: rather than Paul's asking whether he should come with a rod (if the Corinthians continue to disobey) or in a spirit of meekness and love (if they change their behaviour), Cyril thinks that the Apostle is asking whether he should come with rebuke (deserved) or in silence (not rebuking them, even though they deserve it). Cyril's answer is that rebuke is necessary, which is certainly in keeping with Paul's statements in I Cor. 5, but the bishop's misreading of the options is unique among the patristic writers. His comments on this passage show his primary concern to be for the flock at this point; the rebuke removes the danger from the community. His use of *μητρυνῶς* to describe the relationship between the offender and the woman reflects a usage at least as old as Origen, who uses the same term.⁵¹

B. Not only does Cyril cite Amos 2:7 to illustrate what was happening in Corinth; he likewise cites I Cor. 5:1-5 in his commentary on Amos 2:7. Cyril notes that Israel has opted for scandalous behaviour instead of the wise path of self-control. He refers to Reuben, who violated the bed of his father by his intercourse with Bilhah (Gen. 35:22), as an illustration of the behaviour of Israel at the pagan shrines, and then adds:

⁵⁰*PG* LXXIV, 867-70.

⁵¹e.g., in *Catena* XXIII on I Corinthians.

Ἠγανάκτει δὲ σφόδρα καὶ Παῦλος ἐπὶ τοιῷδὲ τινι πεπραγμένῳ παρὰ Κορινθίοις, καὶ ἐπιστέλλει· “Ὀλως ἀκούεται ἐν ὑμῖν πορνεία, καὶ τοιαύτη πορνεία ἣτις οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὀνομάζεται, ὥστε γυναῖκά τινα τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχειν. Ἀλλ’ οὐ μέχρι τούτων ἴστησι τὴν ἀγανάκτησιν. Παραδίδου δὲ τὸν εἰργασμένον τῷ Σατανᾷ, πρὸς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός. Βεβηλοῦσι δὴ οὖν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ αὐτῶν οἱ τοῖς τοιοῖσδε πάθεσιν ἔνοχοι.⁵²

The main point of interest here is Cyril’s indication that he regards the punishment by Paul as being very severe, as befits such an unnatural situation. However, he does not specify what it was that Paul did. His illustration of the incident of Reuben and Bilhah in this context is worthy of note; it has not been seen in the other writers studied thus far in this thesis.

C. A far more revealing passage occurs in Book XII of Cyril’s commentary on John. In treating Jn. 20:22-3, he says,

“Ὤτετο γὰρ δεῖν τοὺς τὸ θεῖόν τε καὶ δεσποτικὸν ἔχοντας ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἤδη Πνεῦμα, καὶ τοῦ διαφεῖναι τὰς τινων ἀμαρτίας εἶναι κυρίους, καὶ ὥνπερ ἂν βούλωνται κρατεῖν, τοῦ ἐνοικισθέντος αὐτοῖς ἁγίου Πνεύματος ἀφιέντός τε καὶ κρατοῦντος κατὰ βούλησιν οἰκείαν, καὶ δι’ ἀνθρώπων τελεῖται τὸ πρᾶγμα τυχόν. Ἀφιασί γε μὴν ἀμαρτίας, ἥτοι κατέχουσιν οἱ πνευματοφόροι, κατὰ δύο τρόπους, κατὰ γε διάνοιαν ἐμήν. Ἡ γὰρ καλοῦσιν ἐπὶ τὸ βάπτισμα τοὺς οἷς ἂν ἤδη καὶ τούτου τυχεῖν ὠφείλετο διὰ τὴν τοῦ βίου σεμνότητα, καὶ τὸ δεδοκιμασμένον εἰς πίστιν, ἢ διακωλύουσιν τινας, καὶ τῆς θείας χάριτος ἐξείργουσιν ἔτι οὐπω τέως γεγονότας ἀξίους. Ἡ καὶ καθ’ ἕτερον τρόπον ἀφιασί τε καὶ κρατοῦσιν ἀμαρτίας, ἐπιτιμῶντες μὲν ἀμαρτάνουσι τοῖς τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τέκνοις, μετανοοῦσι δὲ συγγινώσκοντες, καθάπερ ἀμέλει καὶ Παῦλος τὸν ἐν Κορίνθῳ πορνεύσαντα παραδίδου μὲν εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ, προσίετο δὲ αὐθις, ἵνα μὴ τῇ περισσοτέρᾳ λύπῃ καταποθῇ, καθάπερ αὐτὸς ἐπιστέλλων φησί.⁵³

⁵²PG LXXI, 443-4.

⁵³PG LXXIV, 721-2.

This is an immensely important passage for understanding Cyril's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5. His reference to the "Spirit-bearers" could be construed as referring to the *πνευματικοί* which are so often mentioned in Origen's writings, and who are not necessarily bearers of official power. However, we know that Cyril considered Origen a heretic who was justly condemned.⁵⁴ It is far more likely that Cyril here is thinking in terms of the bishops, since, as Hubert du Manoir has noted, he believes that the bishops are the successors of the Apostles.⁵⁵ Cyril also seems to find it impossible to believe that the college of bishops can err in the Faith, for the bishops have received the same Holy Spirit who inspired the Apostles, and the decisions of the college of bishops are equally infallible.⁵⁶ Thus, it would seem that when Cyril refers to the *πνευματοφόροι*, it is most likely that he is referring to the bishops, who have the apostolic power of binding and loosing. Like Origen and the other Egyptians, he does not say whether he thinks that the punishment invoked by Paul on the offender was anything more than excommunication, but he definitely believes it to have been this; he also believes that now the *πνευματοφόροι* of his time have the same power. The bishops have the ultimate power over the sacraments and over the souls of their flock. Cyril is strongly realistic in his Eucharistic theology,⁵⁷ and this carries over to his understanding of the Power of the Keys which the bishops control.

The passage from the Commentary on John shows a far more explicit treatment of the power of the bishops than we have hitherto seen. Previously, the power of the bishop over penance and restoration has been affirmed time and again, but here we see a more solid theological presentation of what was already believed; previously, the focus has been the offender/penitent; here, it is the power of the bishops, the *πνευματοφόροι*, which is the focus of attention in Cyril's treatment of the

⁵⁴von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Greek Church*, p. 160.

⁵⁵du Manoir, *Dogme et Spiritualité chez Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie*, pp. 340-1.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 196-7.

situation in Corinth. Up to this point, the Corinthian passage has not been used to assert directly the powers of the episcopate (previously they have been assumed, or touched on briefly); Cyril's comments at this point change that situation.

The citation above concludes with the identification of the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2, which is by now familiar. This in itself shows that Cyril believes that even serious sins such as that committed in Corinth can be remitted by the Church. This tallies with what else we know of his teaching, such as his teaching in his commentary on Matthew that the one who has committed sin must purify himself, for all sin is remissible.⁵⁸ Du Manoir has shown that for Cyril, penance is one of the ways in which the sadly fallen image of God in man is restored (other ways which Cyril mentions are, e.g., fasting, almsgiving, pardon of injuries, humility, sacrifice, works of mercy, obedience, and patiently accepted suffering).⁵⁹

D. The only other reference in Cyril's writings to I Cor. 5:3-5 occurs in his commentary on Isaiah (Book I, Oration 1). Cyril is treating Isa. 1:25-8 (RSV numbering; the passage reads, "I will turn my hand against you and will smelt away your dross as with lye and remove all your alloy. And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city."). Referring to the fire of judgment, he mentions Mal. 3:1ff. ("For he is like a refiner's fire...") and Matt. 3:11 ("...he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire"). He refers to the terrible judgment which has come upon the Jewish people (evidently referring to the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70) as a result of their condemnation of Christ. He says that now the judges who have been restored are the Apostles, and that in nothing are they inferior to the earlier (Jewish) judges. As an illustration, Cyril says

⁵⁸*PG* LXXII, 409; cf. du Manoir, *op. cit.*, p. 394.

⁵⁹du Manoir, *op. cit.*, pp. 395-6.

Καὶ γοῦν ὁ σοφώτατος Παῦλος τὸν ἐν Κορίνθῳ
πεπορνευκότα παρεδίδου μὲν τῷ Σατανᾷ εἰς
ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ· καὶ
φησιν· Ἐὰν δέ τις ἀδελφὸς ὀνομαζόμενος, ἢ
πόρνος, ἢ πλεονέκτης, ἢ εἰδωλολάτρης, ἢ λοῖδορος,
ἢ μέθυσος, ἢ ἄρπαξ, τῷ τοιούτῳ μηδὲ συνεσθίειν.⁶⁰

The reference to I Cor. 5:11 is in bold type, since it is a direct quotation from the New Testament, but Cyril is almost as literal in his reference to vv.1-5. This passage is important because it touches on one of Cyril's favourite areas for polemicising: the Jews. This passage clearly reveals his hostility to them, and it is a reminder of the large and flourishing Jewish community existing in Alexandria at the time of Cyril's episcopate. Wilken has remarked, "Unwavering and intractable in his attack, Cyril never gets the Jews off his mind."⁶¹ Here we see Cyril's insistence that the Church is the new Israel, and that the Apostles have replaced those who had the authority of judging under the Old Covenant. Cyril's use of I Cor. 5 here is merely illustrative; he does not specify the nature of the punishment which Paul inflicted on the offender at Corinth.

Cyril's references to the remaining pertinent verses of I Cor. 5 can be treated summarily. He often cites I Cor. 5:7b ("Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us")⁶² in a typological way, showing that Christ is the fulfilment of the Old Testament sacrifices (and that, consequently, Judaism is no longer the way to salvation). He occasionally refers to I Cor. 5:7a (Ἐκκαθάρατε οὖν τὴν παλαιὰν ζύμην...) or I Cor. 5:8 (...μὴ ἐν ζύμῃ παλαιᾷ...) in a way which combines a typological understanding of the fulfilment of the Old Testament laws in Christ with an exhortation to his readers to live a holy life.⁶³ It is a point of interest to see that Cyril, following the lead of

⁶⁰PG LXX, 59-60.

⁶¹Wilken, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-60.

⁶²i.e., in the *Glaphyra* on Deuteronomy (PG LXIX, 677-8) and in *Quod unus sit Christus* (PG LXXV, 1333-4).

⁶³cf. *Paschal Homily II* (PG LXXVII, 433-4; 449-50); XIX (PG LXXVII, 821-4; 823-6); XX (PG LXXVII, 837-9); XXI (PG LXXVII, 851-2); XXIX (PG LXXVII, 957-8); and *Contra Julianum*, Book IX (PG LXXVI, 995-6).

Athanasius in his *Festal Letters*, applies the Corinthian text in a personal sense: each Christian is to cleanse himself or herself from sin. It is not interpreted in a collective, congregational sense. Concerning Cyril's high regard for Athanasius, von Campenhausen remarks:

Athanasius [Cyril] considers the spokesman of the Church par excellence. One-third of Cyril's first work on dogmatics, the tremendous *Thesaurus*, or treasury of a true knowledge of the holy and consubstantial Trinity, consists of nothing but an excerpt from the corresponding *Orations* of Athanasius.⁶⁴

Thus, Cyril's writing of paschal homilies (which Quasten notes are actually letters rather than homilies⁶⁵) is fully in character. Likewise, it is in these letters that both Athanasius and Cyril make reference to I Cor. 5:7-8, in particular.

In summary, Cyril is in full agreement with his Egyptian predecessors: he sees the punishment invoked by Paul as excommunication, and he does not speculate as to whether it involved anything further. He views the punishment as necessary but remedial in its nature. It is noteworthy that Cyril avoids the medical/medicinal terminology which has characterised so many of the Eastern writers; nevertheless, he views the punishment as restorative, since he follows his predecessors in the identification of the offenders in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2. As has been noted, Cyril makes his largest contribution to the developing history of the exegesis of this text in his discussion of the power of the *πνευματοφόροι*. For Cyril, the apostolic power is still very present within the Church of his day, and the bishops are the rightful successors of the Apostles.

To conclude this chapter, it is important to note that the Egyptians stand together; even after Origen has fallen into disfavour, the subsequent Egyptian writers are not able to disregard his great contribution to the history of the exegesis of this

⁶⁴von Campenhausen, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

⁶⁵Quasten, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

troublesome text. For all the Egyptian writers, the offender of I Cor. 5 was truly penitent and was then capable of restoration to the Church; as a consequence, even heinous offenders in the Church of the ensuing centuries could be forgiven and restored to Christian fellowship. Whatever the punishment involved, it included excommunication; beyond this, the Egyptian fathers do not venture. The unanimity of thought is striking, as is the unacknowledged debt to Origen.

Chapter 5

THE SCHOOL OF ANTIOCH

The works of John Chrysostom, who frequently cited I Cor. 5:3-5, will occupy the greatest part of this chapter. However, other writers of this school also made use of the text, and in addition to Chrysostom, this chapter will observe the references to the Corinthian text made by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Severian of Gabala, and Theodoret of Cyrrhus. Since Theodore of Mopsuestia is often considered the theoretician of the School of Antioch, I will begin with his works.

I. THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA

Quasten notes, "Theodore is the most typical representative of the Antiochene school of exegesis and by far its most famous author."⁶⁶ He attracts attention today both for his Christology and for his exegesis, the latter being the subject of several important works which will be cited in this chapter. Many of his works have survived only in fragmentary form, a problem which is exacerbated by the terseness and difficulty of his Greek; the blunt remark by Photius, that he found Theodore's style "neither brilliant nor very clear", should be remembered.⁶⁷ The discovery of some of his works in Syriac in 1932 has sparked further interest in him; it also has a bearing on this chapter, since one of the recent finds contains an explicit reference to I Cor. 5:3-5.

Karl Staab collected the fragments of Theodore's writings on the four major Pauline epistles (Romans, I and II Corinthians, and Hebrews, which Theodore regarded as Pauline) from Greek *catenae* and published them in 1933. Theodore's comments on I Cor. 5:5 are among these surviving fragments, and it will be an appropriate starting point for discovering his views on the exegesis of this passage. The text is as follows:

⁶⁶Quasten, *Patrology* III, p. 402.

⁶⁷cited by Zaharopoulos, *Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Bible*, p. 29.

Ἐδυσώπησε τῇ μνήμῃ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὥστε μὴ τῇ χάριτι τῇ πρὸς ἐκεῖνον παριδεῖν τὸ δέον. παραδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡνῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. τὸ μὲν παραδοῦναι τῷ σατανᾷ οὐχ ὡς αὐτὸς τοῦτο γενέσθαι ὀρίζων εἶπεν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἂν τῷ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐξεωθῆναι διὰ τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλοτριώσεως ὑπὸ τὴν τοῦ σατανᾷ γενουμένου ἐξουσίαν· ἡ μὲν γὰρ παρ' αὐτοῦ τιμωρία ἦν τὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας αὐτὸν ἐξῶσαι, ἐκ δὲ τούτου πάντως ἐκεῖνο συνέβαινεν. ὁ μέντοι ἀπόστολος ἀντὶ τῆς τιμωρίας τὸ ἀποβαῖνον εἶπεν ὥστε φοβῆσαι μᾶλλον. ἐξεῶ δέ, φησὶν, αὐτόν, οὐκ ἀλλοτριῶσαι πάντη βουλόμενος, ἀλλ' <ἵνα> τοῦ οἰκείου αἰσθόμενος πλημμελήματος μεταμελεία τινὶ κατὰ τὸν παρόντα βίον συντρίψας ἑαυτὸν δυνηθῇ τῆς μελλούσης σωτηρίας ἄξιον ἑαυτὸν καταστήσαι. ὄλεθρον εἶπε σαρκὸς τὴν κατὰ τὸν παρόντα βίον διὰ τῆς μεταμελείας συντριβήν. καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἡ ἀνάστασις ἡμῶν τῇ τοῦ πνεύματος δυνάμει γενέσθαι μέλλει, πολλάκις ἐπὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως καὶ τῆς ἀθανασίας τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος λαμβάνει σημασίαν· οὕτως ἐν τῇ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους φησὶν· ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σαρκὶ ἀλλ' ἐν πνεύματι, ἀντὶ τοῦ ἔξω τῆς τοῦ θανάτου γεγονότες ἀποφασεως, ἐν ἐλπίδι τῆς ἀθανασίας καθεστήκατε.⁶⁸

This fragment is not fully satisfactory, since it does not tell us Theodore's ideas as to the nature of the offence, but we see that he strikes a middle course: on the one hand, he sees Paul insisting that the Corinthians do what is necessary in regard to the offender (against laxists), but on the other hand, he indicates that Paul does not intend the punishment to be final (against rigorists). Theodore sees the excommunication of the offender as necessary (τὸ δέον) but suitable (οἰκείου, which has more positive overtones than our word, "suitable"). Perceiving the rebuke (πλημμελήματος), the offender is to undergo penance (μεταμελεία...συντρίψας ἑαυτόν; Theodore's use of μεταμελεία rather than μετανοία is unique among the Greek writers treating the Corinthian passage). The punishment, rather than being final, was to produce [godly]

⁶⁸Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, p. 178.

fear in the heart of the offender (φοβῆσαι μᾶλλον). It should be noted, too, that Theodore does not want the penitent to be completely isolated; as will be seen in the final citation of Theodore's works in this chapter, he reserves full isolation for the impenitent. Theodore's description of the ὀλεθρον τῆς σαρκός as the "crushing by means of repentance" (μεταμελείας συντρίβην) is reminiscent of Origen, who defined Paul's phrase as the rigors undergone by penitents, as well as of the descriptions of ἐξομολόγησις that writers such as Clement, Origen, and Tertullian have left. Louis Pirot has noted:

À propos de la 1. aux Cor. il explique aussi l'excommunication dont fut frappé par St. Paul l'incestueux. Le peine consista dans le rejet de l'Église. Laissé à lui-même, le pécheur put prendre conscience de sa faute, faire pénitence et mériter ainsi son salut. "La perte de la chair" dont il est question indique les mortifications corporelles infligées des cette terre.⁶⁹

Theodore is clear that the punishment is remedial in nature, and that it is to forestall any further descent into spiritual alienation; the final words in the fragment cited above show this, as does the whole tenor of the passage. The fact that the only support or illustration which he mentions is St. Paul is important in the light of his exegetical procedure. Dimitri Zaharopoulos says of Theodore's method:

The emphasis must always fall upon the internal evidence of the biblical text and not upon the external evidence which was formulated by the ecclesiastical tradition, to which the patristic commentators had attached so much importance. No expounder of the Bible has the right to read into it his personal ideas, nor should he be allowed to violate the meaning of the texts by introducing arbitrary comments in the interest of a pre-conceived or pre-established theological system.⁷⁰

⁶⁹Pirot, *L'œuvre exégétique de Théodore de Mopsueste*, p. 228.

⁷⁰Zaharopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

This presumably shows why Theodore mentions only Paul in the citation above; the Apostle's own writings are what will provide the key to understanding his exegesis. He still sees the punishment of the offender as remedial, and this may derive from Origen, in which case Theodore will not be as objective in his exegesis as he would like. Theodore's use of συντριβήν should be noted; Mopsuestia is not far from Cappadocia, and the grueling penances demanded for serious sins in that region have been noted in the epistles of Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa (cf. above). It is possible that Theodore has something like this in mind, although he may be thinking more in the line of Origen, who views the humiliation and degradation of excommunication and penance as the essence of the punishment. Certainly Theodore's contemporary and lifelong friend, John Chrysostom, does not approve the lengthy, stated penances so prominent in the writings of the Cappadocians (cf. below).

Another surviving fragment on I Cor. 5:5 reads:

Ἑομονόμως τῷ πνεύματι καὶ τὸ πνευματικὸν
 χάρισμα λέγεται οὐ τις τυγχάνει ἐν τῷ λουτρῷ τῆς
 παλιγγενεσίας (Tit. 3:5), ὅπερ καταφρονηθὲν
 σβέννυται. διό φησιν δεῖ μετανοίας, ἵνα καὶ
 οὕτως ἐπαναδράμη αὐτῷ τὸ πνευματικὸν χάρισμα,
 καὶ διασωθῇ αὐτὸς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως.⁷¹

This passage shows Theodore's insistence that μετάνοια is necessary to return to the purity given at baptism; but it also shows that he is a believer in the efficacy of penance to bring this about. We also see his high view of the sacrament of baptism, as well as his belief that only those living in the light of their baptismal vows are to be safe in the day of judgment.

In a surviving fragment on 5:7, Theodore says that the ζύμη is the sin of the old life to which the old humanity is yoked; and it is called ζύμη because it spreads, making like itself those who approach it;⁷² here we see Theodore's concern that the

⁷¹Staab, *op. cit.*

⁷²*Ibid.*

"old leaven" be uprooted from the congregation for the sake of the (as yet) uninfected flock. There is also a reference to 5:7 in Theodore's commentary on Malachi. He is treating Mal. 3:3-4, in which the Messiah is said to be as a refiner's fire; he will purify the sons of Levi so that they may offer sacrifices in righteousness. Theodore says that this was fulfilled by Christ, and that now it is not just the sons of Levi who are purified, but all men. He then cites I Cor. 5:7, Ἐκκαθάρατε τὴν παλαιὰν ζύμην, ἵνα ᾦτε νέον φύραμα, καθὼς ἐστὲ ἄζυμοι.⁷³ This is a clear instance of Theodore's typological exegesis; the prophecy has been fulfilled in Christ. As God desired the purification of the sons of Levi, so now he desires the purification of the Church. Here Theodore's reference seems to be to a personal cleansing rather than to the expulsion of a flagrantly sinful member from the assembly.

In a fragment treating I Cor. 5:8, Theodore says:

Ἀκολουθῶς καὶ νῦν ἐχρήσατο τῇ ἐπαγωγῇ μετὰ τὴν ἀπόφασιν· ὥς γὰρ παρὼν καὶ ἐξώσας αὐτὸν οὕτω πρὸς τοὺς παρόντας λοιπὸν διαλέγεται καὶ φήσιν· ὁ τῷ κακῷ συνημμένος κατὰ διάθεσιν ἀναγκαίαν δέχεται τῷ χρόνῳ τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν κοινωνίαν. καὶ ἀκολουθῶν τῷ παραδείγματι, ἀπὸ τῶν πραγμάτων τὴν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ποιεῖται παραίνεσιν.⁷⁴

Theodore thus considers the offender to have been expelled, but then received back into the fellowship of the church in Corinth. The term συνημμένος ("sewn", or "tied") is reminiscent of Gregory of Nyssa's remarks on Eccl. 3:7 ("a time to sew", etc.), but Theodore's word is different; there seems to be no direct connection between the two writers.

The final reference of Theodore to the Corinthian text occurs in the recently discovered (1932) Syriac manuscripts, which include Theodore's treatise on the Eucharist and Liturgy. This work gives a very clear understanding of his exegesis of

⁷³PG LXVI, 621-2.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 178-9.

the Pauline passage. Discussing Isa. 6, Theodore compares the Eucharist to the live coal with which the seraph touched Isaiah's lips. He says that we should approach the Eucharist only when we are living in obedience. He then says:

Let us know that as God gave to our body, which He made passible, medicinal herbs of which the experts make use for our healing, so also He gave penitence, as a medicine for sins, to our soul, which is changeable. Regulations for this [penitence] were laid down from the beginning, and the priests and the experts, who heal and care for the sinners, bring medicine to the mind of the penitents who are in need, according to the ecclesiastical ordinance and wisdom, which is regulated in accordance with the measure of the sins.⁷⁵

Theodore later states, "This is the medicine for the sins, which was established by God and delivered to the priests of the Church, who in making use of it with diligence, will heal the afflictions of men." He then says:

This the blessed Paul seems to have done when he learned that among the Corinthians an insolent man had taken his father's wife. He ordered him to be delivered unto Satan, who had caused him to be driven out of the Church, and he showed the purpose of this by saying: "for the destruction of his flesh, that he may live in spirit in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." As if he were saying: I order this so that he may suffer and be conscious of his sins, and receive reproof; and that through rebuke he may be reprimanded, learn wisdom and turn away from sin and draw nigh unto duty; and after he has thus moved away from sin, he will receive full salvation in the next world, because, at his baptism, he had received the grace of the Spirit, which left him when he sinned and persisted in his sin. He undoubtedly calls the salvation of the spirit the turning away from sins and the full reception of the Holy Spirit, who will cause him to revert to his previous state.⁷⁶

⁷⁵Mingana, *Woodbrooke Studies* VI, p. 120.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 121-2.

He then makes an explicit identification of the offender in I Cor. 5 with the man who is penitent in II Cor. 2:

When [that man] had repented in this way [the Apostle] ordered in the second Epistle that he should be received, and said: "Sufficient to such a man is his reproof, and you ought contrariwise to love him and to comfort him more, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow...With these words he ordered that he should be reinstated in the same confidence as that he had before, because he had been rebuked and had amended his ways, and through repentance, had received forgiveness of his sins."⁷⁷

In a subsequent passage, Theodore says that only the unrepentant brother should be completely cut off from the Christian assembly; the penitent is not fully isolated (cf. the first citation of Theodore's comments on I Cor. 5, above). He then says that God has established the priests as physicians of sins, so that "if we receive in this world, through them, healing and forgiveness of sins, we shall be delivered from the judgment to come...". He says that we should approach priests with great confidence, revealing all our sins to them, and that they, with "all diligence, pain, and love", will give healing to sinners.⁷⁸

This immensely important series of citations is firmly in line with what has already been seen concerning Theodore's exegesis of the Corinthian passage in the surviving Greek manuscripts. To be noted especially is the strongly medicinal flavour of the writing here; it is in the tradition begun by Clement of Alexandria, in which penance is viewed in medical terms, and which has strongly characterised the Church in the East in its views on penance, as seen in other writers studied in previous chapters. Previously, we have noted that Theodore views the ὅλεθρον τῆς σαρκός as the pains undergone by penitents; here he says that it is really a process of healing, in spite of the unpleasantness involved. Theodore views the real danger to be that of

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 122.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 123.

impenitence; for the penitent, forgiveness is available and will be given. In the treatise just cited, Theodore says that turning away from sins through penance will bring the repentant offender back to the state which he received in baptism; this is in agreement with the brief fragment on I Cor. 5:5 cited above; it is also reminiscent of the remarks of Gregory of Nazianzus that both baptism and penance confer forgiveness, but that the forgiveness through penance is much harder to obtain (cf. above). Theodore's statement that Satan caused the man to sin is unique; however, he adds no explanation of his thinking in reference to this, but moves on to the substance of I Cor. 5:3-5.

One other point should be noted: Theodore's statement that the Holy Spirit, which the offender had received at his baptism, had left him is strongly reminiscent of Tertullian's stance (*De pudicitia* 14), that the offender has lost the grace of the sacrament (the context favours the sacrament of *baptism*), although Theodore parts company with the North African writer when he avers that the penitent offender will once again receive the full blessing of the Holy Spirit. As will be seen below, Severian of Gabala takes a different approach to this passage, in which the understanding of πνεῦμα is crucial; in fact, the Antiochenes' approach to πνεῦμα is perhaps the most different item in their exegesis of I Cor. 5. Theodore's statements are not as extreme as those of Severian, but they are definitely related; the Holy Spirit has been lost through the offender's sins, but the man's spirit will be saved when he returns to the path of obedience and penitence. He will then enter once again into full reception of the Holy Spirit.

H.B. Swete has remarked that, "[Theodore] is unwearied in his efforts to grasp the precise meaning of words and phrases...It is however in his logical rather than in his grammatical and lexical treatment of the Epistles that Theodore's power chiefly shews itself. His interest in the language is professedly subordinate to his interest in

the thought which it enshrines."⁷⁹ Certainly this is seen in Theodore's study of the Corinthian passage. He is concerned to get at the meaning of the passage, and the close agreement of the Greek text with the Syriac indicates that he is satisfied with his answers; he does not vary in his understanding of the text. With his zeal for sticking to the Scriptural text, he does not discuss the connection (or difference) between apostolic and sacerdotal power. The Syriac text makes it clear that he believes that priests have the power of guiding penitents to restoration, as well as of excommunicating the impenitent offenders. Thus, he sees a connection between the apostolic and sacerdotal power, but he does not specify what it is. His moderation and caution are quite evident throughout these brief surviving comments on the Corinthian text.

II. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Due to the vast literary output of John Chrysostom, I will summarise his teaching on I Corinthians 5 under the following divisions: vv. 1-2, vv. 3-5, the remainder of I Corinthians 5, II Corinthians 2, and I Timothy 1:20 (which uses the *παράδοῦναι τῷ Σατανᾷ* terminology). In each of these sections, I will highlight the most important passages, making only a brief mention of the rest. It is possible to take this approach with the writings of John because, as will be seen, he never changes his understanding of the Corinthian text. This was also observed in the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia; with Chrysostom it will be much more obvious, since so much of his work has survived.

A. VERSES 1-2

In his fifteenth homily on I Corinthians, John treats I Cor. 5. In chapter 1, he dwells on Paul's horror that 1) such evil is present in the church at all, and that 2) nothing has been done to rectify the situation. Chrysostom does not give us his own

⁷⁹Swete, *Theodore Episcopi Mopsuesteni in Epistolas B. Pauli I*, pp. lxvi-lxvii.

ideas as to the nature of the bond between the offender and the woman; instead, he confines himself to Paul's language, "Ὡστε γυναῖκα τινὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχειν. He suggests that this delicacy of language reflects Paul's reluctance even to refer to such scandalous behaviour with the bluntness it deserves.⁸⁰ However, in his preface to the homilies Chrysostom refers to the woman as the man's μητρυνία, or stepmother (*Argumentum epistolae primae ad Corinthios*⁸¹). In his second letter to Olympias, Chrysostom says that the relationship was not only adultery, but worse than adultery (μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ μοιχείας πολλῷ χαλεπώτερον).⁸² In a list of the problems in the congregation at Corinth, Chrysostom notes that πορνεία was one of them (*Adv. Judaeos* III, 2⁸³). In his comments on Paul's word ἀκούεται, he says that Paul's word shows that not all the Corinthians were involved in the practice of πορνεία (*Homily XXXVI* on I Corinthians⁸⁴); he says that the report which had reached Paul signified that the Corinthians were not practising Christianity in the light of the knowledge which they had received. He also cites I Cor. 5:1 in his seventh homily on Ephesians, which treats Eph. 5:4 ("Nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting..."), saying that [evil] words lead to [evil] deeds.⁸⁵ Chrysostom also notes the existence of the double problem in Corinth: not only is there πορνεία among them, but they are also πεφυσιῶμενοι (*De mutatione nominum* IV, 6;⁸⁶ *Expositio in Psalmos IX*, 10⁸⁷). He speaks of the danger of highmindedness while sinning, citing I Cor. 5:2 (*Homily V*, 1 on Romans⁸⁸). In chapter 2 of his fifteenth homily on II Corinthians, Chrysostom is

⁸⁰PG LXI, 121-2.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 11.

⁸²PG LII, 557.

⁸³PG XLVIII, 863.

⁸⁴PG LXI, 306.

⁸⁵PG LXII, 118.

⁸⁶PG LI, 153.

⁸⁷PG LV, 137-8.

⁸⁸PG LX, 422.

commenting on the change in attitude on the part of the Corinthians (II Cor. 7) in their eagerness to be right. He notes that formerly they were puffed up⁸⁹; he also mentions this in Book III, 14, of *Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum*, in a discussion of despondency. This, says Chrysostom, was an occasion when sorrow should have been present but was not. He then notes the Corinthians' change of attitude, citing II Cor. 2:7 (Μήπως...τῇ περισσοτέρᾳ λύπῃ καταποθῇ ὁ τοιοῦτος).⁹⁰ It will be shown below that Chrysostom makes the identification of the offender of I Cor. 5 and the penitent man of II Cor. 2; this brief citation of I Cor. 5:2 in the company of II Cor. 2:7 is not a random reference. This leads us to the more important references to I Cor. 5:1-2.

1) In *Homily VIII*, 3 of *Adversus Judaeos*, Chrysostom says that we must not scorn our brothers who fall into sin. They must be treated as doctors (ἰατροί) treat their patients. This is what Paul did:

τὸν γοῦν πεπορνευκότα μετὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐκείνην,
μετὰ τὴν παρανομίαν τὴν χαλεπὴν, τὴν οὐδὲ ἐν
τοῖς ἔθνεσιν εὐρισκομένην, οὐ παρεῖδεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ
ἀφηνιῶντα, καὶ μὴ βουλόμενον δέξασθαι τὴν
ἰατροίαν, καὶ σκιρτῶντα καὶ ἀποπηδῶντα,
ἐπανάγαγεν ἐπὶ τὴν θεραπείαν, καὶ οὕτως
ἐπανάγαγεν, ὥστε ἐνῶσαι τῷ σώματι τῆς
Ἐκκλησίας πάλιν...καὶ τέλεον αὐτὸν ἀπήλλαξε τῆς
κηλίδος ἀπάσης.⁹¹

This general reference to the situation in Corinth clearly shows Chrysostom's belief that the sinner was restored to full fellowship in the Corinthian church. This points in the direction of Chrysostom's identification of the offenders mentioned in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2. Chrysostom's use of medical categories for understanding penance should be noted; this is characteristic of the understanding of penance in the East, and it has certainly been noted in the treatment of I Cor. 5 by writers from Origen onward.

⁸⁹PG LXI, 504.

⁹⁰PG XLVII, 491.

⁹¹PG XLVIII, 931.

2) Chrysostom's second letter to Olympias has references to both vv. 1 and 2; in this epistle, John describes the situation which Paul was addressing in Corinth, and he clearly states his belief that I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2 refer to the same individual. He notes Paul's advice (I Cor. 5:11) that Christians should not even eat with a flagrant offender, but notes how Paul reversed the sentence pronounced on the offender after he had been severed from the fellowship with the Church (by the Apostle). Chrysostom's citation of I Cor. 5:2 (καὶ οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἐπενθήσατε, ἵνα ἐξαρθῇ ἐκ μέσου ὑμῶν ὁ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο πεποιηκώς), following his comment about Paul's severing of the offender from the Church, shows that he definitely views excommunication as part of the punishment. He remarks, too, that there should be no common table (τραπέζης κοινῆς) with an impenitent offender.⁹² This passage also makes an important allusion to I Cor. 5:5, which will be discussed below; it is here also that Chrysostom mentions that some people (whom he does not identify) think that the offender held the office of teacher in the Corinthian congregation (πολλοὶ δέ φασιν, ὅτι καὶ διδασκάλου τάξιν ἐπεῖχε). In other places he accepts this idea as commonly known (cf. below).

3) In *Homily I*, chapter 2, of *De paenitentia*, Chrysostom asserts that Paul frightened the man into giving up his sin (πῶς τῆς ἁμαρτίας μᾶλλον τὴν ἀπόγνωσιν δέδοικεν ὁ Παῦλος). He notes that, whereas the Gentiles do not even dare to name such an evil deed, the Church has actually committed it, and are even πεφυσιῶμενοι about it. Chrysostom describes the mourning which Paul desires to see in the Church as ἐξομολόγησις, thus placing his ideas on this passage firmly in the penitential tradition of the Church. He says that it should be mourning like that which occurs when a disease or plague has occurred; we see once again that Chrysostom thinks in medical terms when treating the Corinthian text. In this homily,

⁹²PG LII, 557.

he continues by saying that the whole congregation is threatened by the unpunished offence, quoting I Cor. 5:6 (Οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι μικρὰ ζύμη ὅλον τὸ φύραμα ζυμοῖ;) ⁹³.

4) In *Homily LVII*, 3⁹⁴ on the Gospel of John, Chrysostom is discussing the division which occurred among the Jews over the healing of the man who had been born blind. He asserts that this division must always occur; Christians must be separated from evil men. He then notes that Paul exhorted, Καὶ ἐξαρεῖτε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν (I Cor. 5:13), and Ἵνα ἐξαρθῇ ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν ὁ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο ποιήσας (I Cor. 5:2). He continues:

Δεινὸν γάρ, δεινὸν συνουσία πονηρῶν. Οὐχ οὕτω
ταχέως λοιμὸς ἅπτεται, καὶ ψώρα διαφθείρει τοὺς
ἀναχρῶννυμένους, τοὺς τῷ νοσήματι
κατεχόμενους, ὥς ἡ τῶν πονηρῶν κακία ἀνδρῶν.⁹⁵

Chrysostom's use of ψώρα here should be noted; it is the word used by Origen in his surviving *Catena*e on I Corinthians 5. This further illustrates Chrysostom's reliance on medical categories for understanding the Corinthian text.

In summary: Chrysostom's references to I Cor. 5:1-2 reveal much of his understanding of vv. 3-5. For him, the offenders of I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2 are the same man; therefore, even serious sin is remissible. Penance is basically medicinal, and it is to produce full restoration to the body of the Church. Excommunication is absolutely essential, both for the amendment of the offender and for the safety of the flock. Chrysostom strives for balance in describing the situation at Corinth: the sin was double, πορνεία and impenitent pride. Chrysostom refers to the woman as the man's μητρυνία, perhaps implying a full marriage of the woman with the man's father. He does not say whether he thinks that the father is still alive. The most novel thing

⁹³PG XLIX, 280-1.

⁹⁴Migne notes that it is *Homily LVI* in some MSS.

⁹⁵PG LIX, 314.

we see in Chrysostom's exegesis of the Corinthian passage is his idea that the offender may have held the office of teacher (*Epistula II ad Olympiam*, chapter 2).

B. VERSES 3-5

Chrysostom's views on v. 3 surface largely in his descriptions of apostolic power as seen in the ministry of Paul. In his fifteenth homily on I Corinthians, which treats the first eight verses of this chapter, Chrysostom describes ἀπὸν τῷ σώματι, παρὼν δὲ τῷ πνεύματι as what happened in the story of Elisha and Gehazi (II Kings 5:25-7), an illustration used previously by Origen.⁹⁶ He notes the greatness of the gift given to Paul: Βαβαί! πόση τοῦ χαρίσματος ἡ δύναμις, ὅταν πάντας ὁμοῦ καὶ κατ' αὐτὸ εἶναι ποιῇ, καὶ τὰ πόρρωθεν εἰδέναι παρασκευάζῃ. Chrysostom thinks that the phrase, ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ signifies κατὰ θεόν, i.e., divine, not human, judgment. He mentions that some people (who remain unidentified) think that the ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι κ.τ.λ. should be attached to τὸν οὕτως τοῦτο κατεργασάμενον, implying that the offender committed his sin "in the name of Jesus", thereby insulting the Lord. Chrysostom does not hold this interpretation, but mentions it as a possibility.⁹⁷

In his first homily on Colossians, Chrysostom, discussing how Paul could exercise apostolic power in Colossae without being there in person, asserts that the apostle could make himself present by the divine gift. He cites I Cor. 5:3 as support. Oddly enough, in his comments on Col. 2:5, which uses parallel language, he says nothing further about its meaning.

In his concluding remarks on Romans, Chrysostom is eulogising Paul and referring to his spiritual power; he notes that even Satan feared the Apostle; he trembled at Paul's very shadow and fled at the sound of his voice. Chrysostom then notes:

⁹⁶cf. *Catena* on I Cor. 5.

⁹⁷PG LXI, 123.

Οὕτω γοῦν καὶ τὸν πεπορνευκότα παρέδωκεν αὐτῷ
 πόρρωθεν ὧν, καὶ πάλιν ἐξήρπασε τῶν ἐκείνου
 χειρῶν· οὕτω καὶ ἑτέρους, ἵνα παιδευθῶσι μὴ
 βλασφημεῖν.⁹⁸

This brief reference touches on other parts of the Corinthian passage; Chrysostom here makes obvious reference to v. 5 (παραδοῦναι τῷ Σατανᾷ), as well as to the parallel language in I Tim. 1:20. Likewise, his statement that Paul delivered the Corinthian offender to Satan and then snatched him back implies an identification on Chrysostom's part of the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2, an identification which we have already noted in his works (cf. above). However, here his emphasis is on Paul's power to do things at a distance, i.e., apostolic power, given by divine gift.

In summary, Chrysostom believes that the power to which Paul refers is an actuality, not just a literary device. By implication, he would see this power as residing in the other apostles as well; he does not state any belief as to whether such a power is still resident in the church of his day. The similarity of his thinking to that of Origen, both in his identification of the men in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2⁹⁹ and in his use of the Elisha/Gehazi story to understand Paul's words in I Cor. 5:3¹⁰⁰, should be noted; Elisha told Gehazi that, while absent in body, his spirit stood by Gehazi when the latter accepted a gift (in Elisha's name) from Naaman, when the prophet had already refused it. This story from II Kings 5 is particularly appropriate, since it resulted in a severe punishment to Gehazi, but Chrysostom does not develop this connection further at this point. His mention of some who hold the view that the offender had sinned in the name of Jesus is remarkable in that it has surfaced for discussion among commentators in recent years.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸PG LX, 680-1.

⁹⁹e.g., in *Homily I* on Ps. XXXVII (LXX).

¹⁰⁰cf. his *Catenae* on I Corinthians in. *loc.*

¹⁰¹argued by F. Danker at the SBL meeting in St. Louis, 1976; also by Elaine Pagels in *The Gnostic*

Chrysostom's remarks on I Cor. 5:4 (in isolation from the rest of the text) are few, including one reference *en passant* in his fifth homily on I Timothy, which treats I Tim. 1:20; this passage concerns the handing over of Hymenaeus and Alexander to Satan ἵνα παιδευθῶσι μὴ βλασφημεῖν and will be discussed below. Chrysostom's use of I Cor. 5:4 in that context shows that he considers the parallel language to refer to the same type of event.

In his fifteenth homily on I Corinthians, Chrysostom describes the congregation as meeting in the name of the Lord, with Paul's spirit present also:

Πάλιν ἐπέστησεν αὐτοῖς ἑαυτόν, ἵν' ὅταν
δικάζωσιν, ὡς αὐτοῦ παρόντος, οὕτως αὐτὸν
ἀποτέμωσι, καὶ μηδεὶς τολμήσῃ συγγνώμης αὐτὸν
ἀξιῶσαι, εἰδὼς ὅτι Παῦλος εἴσεται τὰ γενόμενα.¹⁰²

Chrysostom then says that Paul's mention of the δυνάμει τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ is to increase the sense of awe among the Corinthians, and that the phrase signifies that

ὁ Χριστὸς δύναται τοιαύτην ὑμῖν χάριν δοῦναι, ὡς
δύνασθαι τῷ διαβόλῳ παραδιδόναι· ἢ ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς
μεθ' ὑμῶν κατ' αὐτοῦ φέρει τὴν ψῆφον.¹⁰³

This passage is important because it demonstrates that Chrysostom believes that the congregation is to have a part in the judgment of the offender. Paul is present in spirit, and the risen Christ is regarded as the dispenser of the power to punish, but the congregation is to expel the offender; it is not something done for them by Paul. This must be kept in mind when examining other passages from Chrysostom's works

Paul and Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Révue Biblique* 84 (1977), pp. 239-45. These are cited by Fee in his commentary on I Corinthians (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987), p. 206.

¹⁰²PG LXI, 123.

¹⁰³Ibid.

which make it sound as if the expulsion were entirely the work of the Apostle.¹⁰⁴ He confirms the stance he takes here in his fourth homily on II Corinthians, saying:

Καὶ ὥσπερ ἡνίκα ἐκέλευεν ἀποτεμεῖν, οὔτε ἀφῆκεν αὐτοὺς γενέσθαι κυρίους χαρίσασθαι, εἰπὼν, "Ἦδη κέκρικα παραδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ σατανᾷ, καὶ ἔλαβε πάλιν κοινωνοὺς αὐτοὺς τῆς ψήφου εἰπὼν, Συναχθέντων ὑμῶν παραδοῦναι αὐτόν, δύο τὰ μέγιστα κατασκευάζων, καὶ τὸ ἐξενεχθῆναι τῇν ἀπόφασιν, καὶ τὸ μὴ χωρὶς ἐκείνων, ὥστε μὴ δόξαι ταύτῃ πλήττειν, καὶ οὔτε μόνος αὐτὴν ἐκφέρει, ἵνα μὴ νομίσωσιν αὐθάδη εἶναι καὶ ὑπερῶφθαι αὐτοί, οὔτε τὸ πᾶν αὐτοῖς ἐπιτρέπει, ἵνα μὴ κύριοι γενόμενοι προδῶσι τὸν ἡμαρτηκότα, ἀκαίρως αὐτῷ χαριζόμενοι· οὕτω καὶ ἐνταῦθα ποιεῖ λέγων, ὅτι Ἐγὼ ἤδη ἐχαρισάμην, ὅς ἐν τῇ προτέρᾳ ἤδη κέκρικα. Εἴτα ἵνα μὴ πληγῶσιν, ὡς ὑπεροφθέντες, φησί, Δι' ὑμᾶς.¹⁰⁵

This passage is important in that shows Chrysostom's identification of the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent of II Cor. 2; but also for indicating Chrysostom's belief that the congregation in Corinth had a definite part in expelling and restoring the offender. We also observe Chrysostom's opinion that a too-hasty forgiveness is not good. After the passage cited immediately above, Chrysostom continues by saying that disregard for the Apostle's commands would cause great harm, since "A little leaven leavens the whole lump" (I Cor. 5:6), which reveals his concern for the safety of Christians not infected by sin. Finally, this passage, as well as the previous one, demonstrates Chrysostom's fervent belief in the great power wielded by the Apostles.

Chrysostom's references to I Cor. 5:5 are far more numerous than to the earlier part of this passage, reflecting his awareness that this is the real crux of the chapter and showing his keen awareness of where the focus of discussion should lie. As will be seen, his understanding of the text is disciplinary/remedial; his identification of the

¹⁰⁴cf. the citation above from *Adversus Judaeos*, Homily VIII, for an example.

¹⁰⁵PG LXI, 423-4.

offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man in II Cor. 2 has already been noted in this chapter, and the same identification occurs repeatedly in Chrysostom's treatment of I Cor. 5:5. Some of the references examined here cover more than v. 5, but the thrust of Chrysostom's writing here always targets v. 5 as the focus of the text. Because of the number of the references, I will present in full the most important ones, with the others mentioned as illustrative of the various points which the primary ones reveal.

1) The primary starting point will be Chrysostom's fifteenth homily on I Corinthians, chapter 2 of which treats this verse:

Καὶ οὐκ εἶπεν, Ἐνδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ σατανᾷ, ἀλλὰ, Παραδοῦναι, ἀνοίγων αὐτῷ τῆς μετανοίας τὰς θύρας, καὶ ὥσπερ παιδαγωγῶ τὸν τοιοῦτον παραδιδούς. Καὶ πάλιν, Τὸν τοιοῦτον, καὶ οὐδαμοῦ ἀνέχεται τῆς προσηγορίας αὐτοῦ μνημονεύσαι. Εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός. Ὡσπερ ἐπὶ τοῦ μακαρίου Ἰωβ γέγονεν, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὑπὲρ τῆς αὐτῆς ὑποθέσεως. Ἐκεῖ μὲν γὰρ ὑπὲρ στεφάνων λαμπροτέρων, ἐνταῦθα δὲ ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτημάτων λύσεως, ἵνα μαστίξῃ αὐτὸν ἔλκει πονηρῷ ἢ νόσῳ ἑτέρῳ. Καὶ μὴν ἀλλαχοῦ φησιν, ὅτι Ὑπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου κρινόμεθα, ταῦτα πάσχοντες. Ἀλλ' ἐνταῦθα μᾶλλον καθάψασθαι θέλων, τῷ σατανᾷ παραδίδωσι. Καὶ τοῦτο δὲ θεῷ δοκοῦν ἐγίνετο, ὥστε κολάζεσθαι αὐτοῦ τὴν σάρκα. Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀδηφαγίας καὶ τῆς τρυφῆς τῆς κατὰ τὴν σάρκα ἐπιθυμίαι τίκονται, ταύτην κολάζει. Ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. Τουτέστιν, ἡ ψυχὴ οὐχ ὡς ταύτης σωζομένης μόνης, ἀλλ' ὡς ὁμολογουμένου τούτου, ὅτι σωζομένης ἐκείνης, ἀναντιρρήτως καὶ τὸ σῶμα κοινωνήσῃ τῆς σωτηρίας. Καὶ γὰρ θνητὸν δι' αὐτὴν ἐγένετο ἁμαρτοῦσαν· κἂν αὐτὴ δικαιοπραγήσῃ, πάλιν πολλῆς καὶ αὐτὸ ἀπολαύσεται δόξης.¹⁰⁶

This passage contains much of Chrysostom's overall teaching on I Cor. 5:5. He clearly believes that the punishment meted out to the offender was for his restoration, the ἁμαρτημάτων λύσεως. Here Chrysostom makes a distinction

¹⁰⁶PG LXI, 123-4.

between ἐνδοῦναι, which can mean "to give up as lost", and παραδοῦναι, which he interprets as less final than ἐνδοῦναι. The reference to the παιδαγωγὸς strikes an educational note, showing that Chrysostom views the punishment as teaching the offender not to repeat his sin. As the παιδαγωγὸς was responsible for educating his charges and bringing them to maturity, thus penance is to restore fallen offenders to Christian fellowship and obedience.

The mention of Job is characteristic; Chrysostom uses him for an illustration repeatedly, particularly when he is encouraging his flock to endure suffering patiently. Here Chrysostom says that Job suffered in order to obtain brighter crowns, whereas the offender in Corinth was undergoing punishment leading to restoration; but Chrysostom often uses Job in conjunction with the Corinthian text when addressing the problem of suffering in the Christian life (*De diabolo tentatore* II, 4;¹⁰⁷ *Epistula IV ad Olympiam*, 2-3;¹⁰⁸ *Homily V*, 3 on I Timothy.¹⁰⁹). Other references which Chrysostom frequently uses as backing for this interpretation of I Cor. 5:5 are Luke 16:19-31 (cf. below) and I Cor. 11:27-32, which concerns the divine judgment on those who partake of the Lord's Supper unworthily. It is possible that the clause, Ὑπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου κρινόμεθα, in the passage cited above, is a loose quotation of I Cor. 11:32, which reads, ὑπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου παιδεύομεθα. This is supported by Chrysostom's frequent references to that passage in connection with 5:5 (*Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum* I, 3;¹¹⁰ *De decem millium talentorum debitore homilia*

¹⁰⁷PG XLIX, 262.

¹⁰⁸PG LII, 592-3.

¹⁰⁹PG LXII, 528-9.

¹¹⁰PG XLVII, 432.

5;¹¹¹ *De Lazaro* III, 5;¹¹² *Expositio in Psalmum CXLI*, chapter 1;¹¹³ *Homily V*, 4, on Hebrews.¹¹⁴).

One point which is worthy of serious consideration is that Chrysostom thinks that the punishment may involve something in addition to excommunication; he refers to ἔλκει πονηρῷ ἢ νόσῳ ἑτέρῳ. His thinking here is perhaps conditioned by his habit of conjoining the story of Job, who suffered grievously from sores, with the incident in I Cor. 5, but he clearly envisions something of this sort as being involved in the punishment. This is the first time in the course of this thesis that we see this stance; Origen, the Cappadocians, and the later Egyptian writers were content to say that the punishment involved excommunication, but they did not venture further. Chrysostom does. However, he does not indicate that any punishment of this sort was common in the Church of his day. He is here confining himself to the exegesis of the passage, and he thinks that excommunication is only part of the punishment. If he makes no mention of its happening in the Church of his day, one could surmise that he does not think that the full apostolic power is any longer present. This is a possibility, but it is only an argument from silence.

Chrysostom's mention of the soul (not the body) being the centre of activity in the sin and restoration of the offender should be noted; for him, the soul does not lose its essential character even when it sins. This is in contrast to Epiphanius of Salamis (cf. Appendix B), who thinks that, when sin enters the life, the soul *becomes flesh*, a sentiment shared by Ambrosiaster (cf. below).

Immediately after the lengthy passage cited above, Chrysostom says that some think that the spirit which is to be saved is the Holy Spirit (Τίνες δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ χάρισμά φασιν...), which σβέννυται ἁμαρτανόντων ἡμῶν. He does not favour this

¹¹¹PG LI, 25.

¹¹²PG XLVIII, 999.

¹¹³PG LV, 442-3.

¹¹⁴PG LXIII, 51.

construction, but it will be seen to figure in the exegesis of this passage by Severian of Gabala, particularly the reference to τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ χάρισμα (cf. below). The view is also reminiscent of Tertullian's thinking in *De pudicitia* 13, in which he thinks that the spirit is the spirit of the Church (which he does not fully equate with the Holy Spirit). Chrysostom favours the idea that the spirit which is to be saved is the man's spirit (thus in agreement with Theodore of Mopsuestia; cf. above), but he does not thereby affirm that the Holy Spirit has been lost, which Theodore maintains; there is a variety of opinion among writers of the Antiochene school at this point.

Chrysostom concludes this chapter of the homily by saying that the reference to the day of the Lord Jesus is not to frighten the sinner, but to inform him that, even if he is punished, the devil will not be allowed to go a step too far; as in the case of Job, Satan is to "touch not his life".¹¹⁵

2) In Chrysostom's early work, *Ad Theodorum Lapsum* I, 8, there is a reference to the Corinthian text which includes the idea mentioned earlier, that the offender had been a leader in the Corinthian congregation (cf. above, *Epistula II ad Olympiam*, in the section pertaining to I Cor. 5:1-2). Chrysostom is concerned here to show that Paul, when excommunicating, did not envision a final separation from the Church. He says:

Παρά Κορινθίοις ἐπίσημός τις ἀνὴρ ἀμαρτίαν
εἰργάσατο τοιαύτην, οἷα οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν
ὠνομάζετο. Πιστὸς δὲ οὗτος ἦν, καὶ τῶν
ῥηκνωμένων Χριστῷ· τινὲς δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ τῶν
ἱερωμένων εἶναί φασι.¹¹⁶

Chrysostom notes Paul's rebuke of the Corinthians because they had not taken action against the man, but says that the Apostle also desired to show that there was no sin which cannot be healed (βουλόμενος δὲ ἡμῖν δεῖξαι, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀμάρτημα, ὃ μὴ δύναται ἰαθῆναι) by exhorting the Corinthians to receive the penitent offender

¹¹⁵PG LXI, 124.

¹¹⁶PG XLVII, 286.

back into their fellowship. The surrender to Satan, Chrysostom says, was before the man had repented; afterwards Paul spoke in the words of II Cor. 2:6, saying that the penitence was sufficient for forgiveness.

Besides the clear identification of the offenders in I Cor. 1 and II Cor. 2 and the interesting idea that the offender was a leader in the congregation, this passage is noteworthy for Chrysostom's blunt statement that there is no sin which cannot be forgiven. The contrast with Tertullian's stance in *De pudicitia* could hardly be stronger; the stance to which Tertullian objected so violently has now become the tradition of the Catholic Church; the contrast between these two shows how the penitential tradition has developed in the two centuries which (roughly) separate the writings of these two men. Watkins, noting Chrysostom's list of various ways in which sins may be forgiven, say that, with Chrysostom, "the widest possible door is thrown open for the return of every kind of offender".¹¹⁷ Yet it is not an easy return; we have already noted Chrysostom's emphasis on excommunication and a period of penance.

3) Another of Chrysostom's characteristic themes in his treatment of I Cor. 5:5 appears in *De diabolo tentatore* II, 4, in which even Satan is shown to be useful to us. Chrysostom refers to Job and then to I Cor. 5:5, a common pairing for him, as has been seen above. He then says:

Ἴδου καὶ σωτηρίας αἷτιος ὁ διάβολος γέγονεν, ἀλλ' οὐ παρὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ γνώμην, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν τέχνην τοῦ Ἀποστόλου. Καθάπερ γὰρ οἱ ἰατροὶ ἐχίδνας λαμβάνοντες καὶ τὰ ὀλέθρια αὐτῶν ἀποτέμνοντες μέλη, τὰ θηριακὰ κατασκευάζουσι φάρμακα· οὕτω καὶ ὁ Παῦλος ἐποίησεν· ὅσον χρήσιμον ἦν ἀπὸ τῆς κολάσεως τῆς ἐπαγομένης παρὰ τοῦ διαβόλου λαβών, τὸ λοιπὸν εἶασεν.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷Watkins, *A History of Penance* I, p. 337.

¹¹⁸PG XLIX, 261-2.

Chrysostom then says that, in order to show the Corinthians that the devil is not the cause of salvation, Paul proceeds to cut the devil's throat, since he was swallowing the despairing penitent (τὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ καταπιεῖν ἠπείγετο, ὁ δὲ ἀπόστολος διὰ τῆς αὐτοῦ σοφίας τὴν λαίμην ἐνέκοψεν), citing II Cor. 2:7 (μὴ πῶς τῇ περισσοτέρᾳ λύπῃ καταποθῇ ὁ τοιοῦτος); Paul counseled the congregation to receive him again. Chrysostom then adds this important sentence:

Ὡς γὰρ δημίῳ πολλάκις ἐχρήσατο τῷ διαβόλῳ ὁ Ἀπόστολος· οἱ δὲ δῆμιοι κολλάζουσι μὲν τοὺς ἡμαρτηκότας, οὐ μὴν ὅσον βούλονται, ἀλλ' ὅσον οἱ δικάζοντες ἐπιτρέπουσιν· οὗτος γὰρ δημίῳ νόμος, τῷ νεύματι τοῦ δικαστοῦ προσέχοντα τιμωρεῖσθαι.¹¹⁹

He then concludes by referring to the sufferings of Job (as has been noted, Chrysostom often couples I Cor. 5:5 with the story of Job), saying that, even though the devil is a spiritual being, he has been weakened by his rebellion against God, and that, even though our bodies may seem to be an encumbrance, we may have boldness which Satan does not possess, when we are obedient.

This passage contains another of Chrysostom's favourite concepts for understanding I Cor. 5:5, that of Satan as the δῆμιος, the executioner who discharges the commands of the judge as he is ordered. Chrysostom makes use of this idea in connection with I Cor. 5:5 on other occasions, also (*In principium Actorum* III, 5;¹²⁰ *Epistula II ad Olympiam*;¹²¹ *Homily V*, 2 on I Timothy.¹²²). In this passage, we note the familiar emphasis on the identity of the figures in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2 and the emphasis on the remedial character of the punishment.

The reference to medical terminology near the beginning of the first part of the citation should be noted; here Chrysostom joins other writers of the Eastern church in

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, 262.

¹²⁰*PG* LI, 95-6.

¹²¹*PG* LII, 557.

¹²²*PG* LXII, 528.

his thinking. As doctors prepare medicines (from dreadful sources) which serve as antivenins, thus Paul used the work of the devil to bring salvation to the offender. Chrysostom's reference to ἐχίδνας should particularly be noted; this is the word used in a similar context in the dubious commentary on Isaiah included in the works of Basil,¹²³ in which physicians are said to use the poison of ἐχίδνας (vipers) for healing the ill.

4) Chrysostom's fondness for coupling references to I Cor. 5 with the story of Job and with I Cor. 11:30-2 has been noted; he has another favourite passage which he often mentions in conjunction with I Cor. 5, and that is the story of Lazarus and Dives (Lk. 16:19-31). The following passage from *Habentes eundem spiritum* III, 7 is characteristic:

Ἄκουσον τῶν ἐξῆς· Ὡςπερ γὰρ ἐν πυρὶ δοκιμάζεται χρυσός, οὕτως ἄνθρωποι δεκτοὶ ἐν καμίνῳ ταπεινώσεως [Eccli. 2:5]. Ὁ δὲ λέγει τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν· Ὡςπερ τὸ χρυσίον τῷ πυρὶ βασανιζόμενον καθαρώτερον γίνεται, οὕτω καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ, θλίψεσιν ὁμιλοῦσα καὶ κινδύνοις, φαιδροτέρα καὶ λαμπρότερα ἄνεισι, καὶ πᾶσαν ἁμαρτημάτων ἀπορρίπτεται κηλῖδα. Ὅθεν καὶ πρὸς τὸν πλούσιον ἔλεγε ὁ Ἀβραάμ, ὅτι Λάζαρος ἀπέλαβε τὰ κακά, καὶ ἐνταῦθα παρακαλεῖται. Καὶ Παῦλος Κορινθίοις ἐπιστέλλων ἔγραψε· Διὰ τοῦτο ἐν ὑμῖν πολλοὶ ἀσθενεῖς καὶ ἄρρώστοι. Εἰ γὰρ ἑαυτοῖς ἐκρίνομεν, οὐκ ἂν ἐκρινόμεθα· κρινόμενοι δὲ τοῦ Κυρίου παιδεύομεθα, ἵνα μὴ σὺν τῷ κόσμῳ κατακριθῶμεν [a reference to I Cor. 11:32]. Καὶ τὸν πεπορνευκότα δὲ δι' αὐτὸ τοῦτο παρέδωκεν εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ· δεικνὺς ὅτι σωτηρίαν ὁ παρὼν ἐργάζεται πειρασμός, καὶ οἱ κίνδυνοι τοῖς μετ' εὐχαριστίας αὐτοὺς φέρουσι, καθάρσιον ψυχῆς εἰσι μέγιστον.¹²⁴

Chrysostom thus uses the story of Lazarus for encouragement to those of his flock who are going through rough times. Lazarus's situation is very different from

¹²³PG XXX, 573-6.

¹²⁴PG LI, 296.

that of the offender in Corinth, or of that of the members in Corinth who were sickly and dying, but in all these instances, the difficulty was for the purpose of making the people better. The last words in the citation above show that Chrysostom believes that the punishment of those who offended in Corinth was actually part of the healing.

In the stories of Job and Lazarus, Chrysostom seems to have found a great source of encouragement for those who were suffering. His numerous references to the former, in conjunction with I Cor. 5, have been noted (cf. above); his references to Lazarus in conjunction with the same verse are also plentiful (*Ad Stagirium a daemone vexatum* I, 3;¹²⁵ *De decem millium talentorum debitore* 5;¹²⁶ *De Lazaro* III, 5;¹²⁷ VI, 4;¹²⁸ *Epistula IV ad Olympiam*, chapter 3;¹²⁹ *Homily V, 4* on Hebrews; ¹³⁰ *Expositio in Psalmum CXLI*, 1;¹³¹).

Although it is rare for Chrysostom in his citations of I Cor. 5:5 to refer to the redemptive power of suffering in the life of the Christian without reference to either Job or Lazarus, one such passage does occur. In his commentary on Matthew (IX, 2), he states his belief that all [Christian] suffering, whether that of the innocents slaughtered at Bethlehem (Matt. 2:16-18) or of the man whom Paul surrendered to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, for the salvation of the spirit, is for their benefit.¹³²

5) The next passage to be studied is from Chrysostom's fifth homily on I Timothy, which treats I Tim. 1:20. It is an extremely important passage for determining Chrysostom's understanding of the παραδοῦναι τῷ σατανᾷ

¹²⁵PG XLVII, 431-2.

¹²⁶PG LI, 25.

¹²⁷PG XLVIII, 998-9.

¹²⁸*Ibid.*, 1032.

¹²⁹PG LII, 593.

¹³⁰PG LXIII, 51.

¹³¹PG LV, 442-3.

¹³²PG LVII, 177-8.

phraseology. In the biblical text, Hymenaeus and Alexander have been surrendered to Satan ἵνα παυδευθῶσι μὴ βλασφημεῖν. Chrysostom asks:

Πῶς δὲ ὁ Σατανᾶς αὐτοὺς παιδεύει μὴ βλασφημεῖν; εἰ γὰρ τοὺς ἄλλους παιδεύει μὴ βλασφημεῖν, πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἑαυτὸν ἐχρῆν· εἰ δὲ ἑαυτὸν μέχρι τοῦ νῦν οὐ δύναται παιδεῦσαι, οὐδὲ τοὺς ἄλλους. Οὐκ εἶπεν, "Ἴνα παιδεύσῃ μὴ βλασφημεῖν, ἀλλ' "Ἴνα παυδευθῶσι μὴ βλασφημεῖν. Οὐκ ἐκεῖνος τοῦτο ἐργάζεται, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο ἐκβαίνει· ὥσπερ οὖν καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ φησιν ἐπὶ τοῦ πεπορνευκότος· Παράδοτε τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ Σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός· οὐχ ἵνα σώσῃ τὸ σῶμα, ἀλλ' ἵνα σωθῇ τὸ πνεῦμα· τοῦτο δὲ ἀπροσώπὸν ἐστὶ. Πῶς οὖν τοῦτο γίνεται; "Ὡσπερ οὖν οἱ δῆμιοι μυρίων γέμοντες κακῶν τοῦς ἄλλους σωφρονίζουσιν, οὕτω καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἐπὶ τοῦ πονηροῦ δαίμονος. Καὶ διὰ τί μὴ σὺ αὐτοὺς ἐκόλασας, ὥσπερ ἐκείνον τὸν Βαριησοῦν, ὥσπερ Κηφᾶς Ἀνανίαν, ἀλλὰ τῷ Σατανᾷ παρέδωκας; Οὐχ ἵνα κολασθῶσιν, ἀλλ' ἵνα παιδευθῶσι.¹³³

He then says that Paul definitely had the power to do this himself, citing I Cor. 4:21 ("What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod?") and II Cor. 13:7 and 10 ("Not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right"; "[the power which the Lord gave me] for building you up and not for tearing you down"¹³⁴) and then continues:

Τί οὖν τὸν Σατανᾶν καλεῖ πρὸς τὴν τιμωρίαν; Ἴνα μετὰ τῆς σφοδρότητος καὶ τῆς κολάσεως καὶ ἡ ὕβρις ἢ μείζων· μᾶλλον δὲ τοὺς μὲν ἀπίστους αὐτοὶ ἐπαίδευσον, τοὺς δὲ ἐκτραπέντας τῷ Σατανᾷ παρεδίδουν.

He notes that Ananias seems to be an exception to this rule, since he was punished by Peter rather than being delivered to Satan, but Chrysostom says that this was because Ananias was not really a Christian. He continues:

Καθάπερ οὖν ἐπὶ τῶν βασιλέων, τοὺς μὲν πολεμίους καὶ οἰκείαις σφάττουσι χερσί, τοὺς δὲ

¹³³PG LXII, 528.

¹³⁴Chrysostom reverses the phrases here.

ὕφ' ἑαυτοὺς τοῖς δημίοις παραδιδόασιν, οὕτω καὶ ἐνταῦθα. Δείκνυται δὲ ἀπὸ τούτου, ὅτι διὰ τὴν τῶν ἀποστόλων φυλακὴν τοῦτο ἐγίνετο· ἄλλως δὲ οὐδὲ μικρὸν ἦν τὸ δύνασθαι ἐπιτάττειν τῷ διαβόλῳ· τοῦτο γὰρ δεικνύντος ἦν, ὅτι δουλεύει καὶ εἵκει καὶ ἄκων τοῖς ἀποστόλοις ὁ διάβολος. "Ὡστε οὐκ ἔλαττον εἰς χάριν τοῦτο ἦν. Πῶς δὲ παρέδωκεν, ἄκουσον. Συναχθέντων ὑμῶν, φησι, καὶ τοῦ ἐμοῦ πνεύματος σὺν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, παράδοτε τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ Σατανᾷ. Ἐξεβάλλετο οὖν εὐθέως τοῦ κοινοῦ συνεδρίου, ἀπεσχίζετο τῆς ἀγέλης, ἐγίνετο ἔρημος καὶ γυμνός, παρεδίδοτο τῷ λύκῳ...Οὕτω καὶ ὁ Κύριος παρέδωκε τὸν Ἰούδαν τῷ Σατανᾷ· εὐθέως γὰρ μετὰ τὸ ψωμίον εἰσῆλθεν εἰς ἐκείνον ὁ Σατανᾶς...Οὕτω καὶ ὁ Ἰῶβ παρεδόθη τῷ Σατανᾷ· ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνος οὐχ ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτημάτων, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ πλείονος εὐδοκίμησεως.¹³⁵

This lengthy passage encapsulates much of Chrysostom's teaching on the παραδοῦναι τῷ Σατανᾷ phraseology which figures so prominently both in I Tim. 1:20 and I Cor. 5:5. We note the familiar reference to Job here, although as Chrysostom remarks, the surrender in his case was not on account of sins. The concept of the δῆμιος surfaces again here, the public executioner who, though evil himself, may discharge the commands of a virtuous higher power. Also, Chrysostom notes that the devil is subject to the apostles; this is consonant with his frequent praise of the apostles, which was particularly noted under his treatment of I Cor. 5:4. We see clearly that Chrysostom thinks that, whatever else may have been involved, the punishment involved excommunication. His other clauses, ἐγίνετο ἔρημος καὶ γυμνός, παρεδίδοτο τῷ λύκῳ, may suggest something further; we have seen that, in *Homily XV* on I Corinthians, Chrysostom believes that the punishment may have involved more than excommunication; we see from this passage that he views it as involving nothing less. This passage, it should be noted, seemingly runs counter to what Chrysostom says in *Homily XV* on I Corinthians; here it sounds as if the sentence is entirely the work of the apostle; there, he says that the congregation definitely has a

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, 528-9.

share in the imposition of it. Given Chrysostom's consistent praise of apostolic power, I think that it is safe to surmise that his heart favours the idea of the punishment being inflicted by the Apostle (an idea supported by the ecclesiastical tradition of his time), but that his exegetical honesty compels him to do justice to the congregational element which figures in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2.

These are the most important of Chrysostom's references to I Cor. 5:5. There are others in which he touches on several other points: in one passage, he notes that the punishment inflicted by Paul was for the sake of the flock as well as for the sake of the sinner: Ψώρας τὸ πρόβατον ἐμπέπληστο πολλῆς, ἡλλοτριώθη τῆς ἀγέλης, ἀπερρύαγη τῆς Ἐκκλησίας.¹³⁶ Chrysostom's use of ψώρας is to be noted, since it is used by Origen in his *Catena* on I Corinthians 5. In other passages, the remedial nature of the punishment (often coupled with the identification of the offenders in I and II Corinthians) is stressed (*De laudibus sancti Pauli Apostoli* III ¹³⁷ and VI;¹³⁸ *De mutatione nominum* III, 1;¹³⁹ *Homily XV*, 2 on II Corinthians;¹⁴⁰ *Homily XXXVIII*, 1 on John's gospel;¹⁴¹ *Homily XIII*, 6 on Romans;¹⁴² *De paenitentia I*, 3;¹⁴³ *Epistula II ad Olympiam*, chapter 3;¹⁴⁴ *Homily XXXVIII*, 6 on I Corinthians;¹⁴⁵ *Homily IX*, 2 on Genesis;¹⁴⁶ *In Sanctum Romanum Martyrem I*, 2.¹⁴⁷). In this connection, Chrysostom

¹³⁶*Epistula II ad Olympiam*; PG LII, 558.

¹³⁷PG L, 485.

¹³⁸PG L, 506.

¹³⁹PG LI, 132.

¹⁴⁰PG LXI, 505. This passage also says that the excommunication was for the sake of the flock.

¹⁴¹PG LIX, 211.

¹⁴²PG LX, 516.

¹⁴³PG XLIX, 281-2.

¹⁴⁴PG LII, 558. This passage has the important words, διώρθωσε τὴν νόσον, γέγονε πρόβατον οἷον ἔμπροσθεν ἡν.

¹⁴⁵PG LXI, 329-30.

¹⁴⁶PG LIV, 623.

¹⁴⁷PG L, 608.

occasionally cites Isa. 40:1-2, in which comfort comes to Jerusalem after her punishment (*De Lazaro III*, 5;¹⁴⁸ *Expositio in Psalmum CXLI*, chapter 1; ¹⁴⁹ *Homily V*, 4 on Hebrews.¹⁵⁰).

Two other references of Chrysostom to I Cor. 5:5 should be noted briefly; one occurs in *In principium Actorum III*, 5;¹⁵¹ here Chrysostom says that Paul's surrender of the offender to Satan showed the Apostle's absolute power (αὐθεντίας). This passage is also one of those referring to Satan and his demons as δῆμιοι. The other reference occurs in *De incomprehensibili Dei natura V*, 5;¹⁵² here Chrysostom is merely noting the different ways in which the word πνεῦμα is used in Scripture. He says that ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ has reference to our soul (τὴν ψυχὴν τὴν ἡμέτεραν). He attaches no further commentary.

This concludes the examination of Chrysostom's frequent use of I Cor. 5:5. In summary, it is overwhelmingly obvious that he identifies the sinner of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2. As a consequence, even serious sins are remissible. As a true son of the Eastern church, he views the punishment in medical terms; excommunication is necessary, but it is the harsh medicine necessary to bring not only restoration, but the healing of the sin which brought about the excommunication. It is remedial, through and through. However, Chrysostom also notes the necessity of the excommunication of the member infected by sin, for the safety of the flock; thus, there is a preventive character to what Paul prescribes for the offender in Corinth.

Chrysostom's pastoral concern shines through his writings; he takes pains to deal with the problem of suffering, desiring to let his flock know that it has a place in the plan of God. It serves a purpose, whether in the case of the comparatively

¹⁴⁸PG XLVIII, 998-9.

¹⁴⁹PG LV, 442-3.

¹⁵⁰PG LXIII, 51.

¹⁵¹PG LI, 95-6.

¹⁵²PG XLVIII, 743.

righteous, such as Job; or of the disobedient, such as the Corinthian offender; or of those who are being weaned away from trusting in the things of this world, such as Lazarus (Lk. 16:19ff.). Thus, suffering in the life of the Christian is redemptive and does not mean that Satan has taken control away from God.

Chrysostom is perhaps most interesting in his treatment of the place of Satan in the Corinthian passage. The role of the δῆμιος is one which has great meaning for him; Satan is an evil spirit, but he is allowed to carry out the work of God, even against his own will, in the purification of sinners.

The monolithic character of Chrysostom's treatment of the Corinthian text is also obvious; it varies little in its main outlines. The supporting illustrations may change, although Chrysostom has certain favourite figures or verses to use in this context

Although he does not comment on it fully apart from the his fifteenth homily on I Corinthians, Chrysostom definitely believes that the punishment was excommunication, but he mentions the possibility of its including something drastic in addition, such as a serious disease, which is to effect the ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός; he does not resort to Origen's idea that the σάρξ which is to be destroyed is the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός. However, he follows in the footsteps of Origen by identifying the offenders of I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2, as well as in illustrating penance by medical categories. He also follows the Alexandrian in his use of δῆμιος.

Chrysostom seems to be ambivalent about the place of the congregation in the imposition of the sentence. In the fifteenth homily on I Corinthians, he definitely accords a place to the congregation, but in many of his other works, his praise of Paul and the apostolic power he enjoyed make it sound as though the punishment was strictly Paul's, not the congregation's.

C. THE REMAINDER OF I CORINTHIANS 5

1) **Verse 6:** some of the references listed above include this verse, showing Chrysostom's concern for the flock; the infected member must be expelled, for the sake of those yet healthy. His other references to this verse (*Homily XV, 3* on I Corinthians;¹⁵³ *Expositio in Psalmum XI*, chapter 1;¹⁵⁴ *Homily XV, 2* on II Corinthians;¹⁵⁵ *Homily XXXI, 1* in Hebrews.¹⁵⁶) are uniformly preventive; evil must be cast out before it spreads to the rest of the community.

2) **Verse 7:** It is not surprising to find several typological references to 7b ("Christ, our passover, is sacrificed"); it is perhaps more surprising not to find them more frequently in the writing of Chrysostom. They surface in *Adversus Iudaeos III, 4*;¹⁵⁷ and in *Homily XXIII, 2* on Ephesians.¹⁵⁸ In his fifteenth homily on I Corinthians, which treats this verse, Chrysostom notes that the entire congregation at Corinth was the target of Paul's censure, and he says that each of us still has sin, from which we must be purified. Since Christ has come, we must be as zealous to rid ourselves of the evil in our lives as the Jews are to rid their households of leaven.¹⁵⁹

This is important, since we see Chrysostom opting for a personal, spiritual cleansing here, an approach which has been seen in other writers; however, he combines it with the concept of a congregational cleansing, and this is unique in the writers observed thus far. His exegetical scrupulousness forbids him to opt for a strictly spiritual, internalised cleansing; he is aware that the verse was originally written with reference to a congregation needing cleansing from a flagrant offender.

¹⁵³PG LXI, 124.

¹⁵⁴PG LV, 145.

¹⁵⁵PG LXI, 505.

¹⁵⁶PG LXIII, 213.

¹⁵⁷PG XLVIII, 867.

¹⁵⁸PG LXII, 166.

¹⁵⁹PG LXI, 125-6.

In this light, a citation from *Homily XV*, chapter 5, will be appropriate to conclude Chrysostom's treatment of this verse:

Ἐμοὶ δὲ δοκεῖ μάλιστα ὁ περὶ τῆς ζύμης λόγος καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἱερέας ἀποτείνεσθαι, οἱ ἀνέχονται πολλὴν ἔνδοθεν εἶναι ζύμην παλαιάν, οὐκ ἐκκαθαίροντες ἐκ τῶν ὀρίων, τουτέστιν, ἐκ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τοὺς πλεονέκτας, τοὺς ἄρπαγας, καὶ πᾶν ὅπερ ἂν ἐκβάλλῃ τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν.¹⁶⁰

This is reminiscent of Origen in his excoriation of priests who refuse to do their duty in putting offenders out of the church (cf. his seventh homily on Joshua). Here Chrysostom shows his full awareness that the cleansing Paul is demanding is primarily in reference to the local congregation.

Verse 9: Chrysostom treats this verse only in *Homily XVI*, 1 on I Corinthians. Even here the reference is brief. The verse in question concerns the shunning of a professing Christian who is living in flagrant sin. Chrysostom mentions I Cor. 5:2 (Οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἐπενθήσατε) and 5:7a (Ἐκκαθάρατε τὴν παλαιάν ζύμην) in connection with this verse, but moves quickly on to vv. 10-11, not developing the argument, but speaking in such a way that it can be seen that he is in firm agreement with the Apostle's command not to eat with such a person.¹⁶¹

Verse 11: As in his treatment of v. 9, Chrysostom's treatment of this verse in *Homily XVI* on I Corinthians is very brief, although we can sense his approval of Paul's injunction. In his twenty-fifth homily on Hebrews, chapter 3, he is discussing Abraham's frame of mind when he was ready to sacrifice Isaac (Gen. 22; Heb. 11:17-9) and launches into an attack on covetousness, which he says reveals an imperfect mind. He notes that Paul, who allowed Christians to attend meals at the homes of non-Christians, forbade them to eat with Christians who were covetous. He cites I

¹⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 127.

¹⁶¹*PG LXI*, 129-30.

Cor. 5:11 three times (twice partially but once completely).¹⁶² Twice he uses Paul's command to demonstrate that it is possible for Christians to live like pagans (*Homily VII*, 1 on I Timothy;¹⁶³ *Homily I*, 2 on Titus¹⁶⁴); once he addresses the question of how Jesus was able to eat at the house of Matthew, in the company of sinners, since Matthew was by now a Christian. He posits the possibility that I Cor. 5:11 was not meant for teachers (who would be using such meals as an opportunity to teach), but also notes that Matthew's companions were not yet Christian.¹⁶⁵ Here Chrysostom seems to be thinking out loud, working through possible questions; however, it is obvious that he favours obedience to Paul's command. Far more important is a reference from *Homily V*, 3 on II Thessalonians. Chrysostom is treating Paul's benediction (Ἡ χάρις τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν) and notes the promise of Christ (Matt. 28:20) to be with his disciples to the end of the age. He then adds:

οὐ γὰρ πάντως ἔσται μεθ' ἡμῶν, ἐὰν ἑαυτοὺς πόρρῳ ποιῶμεν. Μεθ' ὑμῶν, φησὶν, ἔσομαι διαπαντός. Μὴ τοίνυν τὴν χάριν ἀπελάσωμεν. Στέλλεσθαι ἡμᾶς βούλεται ἀπὸ παντός ἀδελφοῦ ἀτάκτως περιπατοῦντος. Μέγα ἦν τότε τοῦτο τὸ κακόν, τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ πληρώματος ἀποσπασθῆναι τῶν ἀδελφῶν. Τούτῳ γοῦν ἅπαντας τιμωρεῖται, καθὼς καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ γράφων Κορινθίοις, ἔλεγε· Τῷ τοιούτῳ μηδὲ συνεσθίειν φησὶν. Ἀλλ' οὐ νῦν μέγα αὐτὸ ἡγοῦνται οἱ πλείους, ἀλλὰ πάντα συγκέχυται καὶ διέφθαρται...Καὶ ἵνα μάθῃς ὅσον ἦν φοβερόν τὸ χωρίζεσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ συλλόγου τῶν ἀδελφῶν, καὶ ὅσον φέρει κέρδος τοῖς εὐγνωμόνως τὴν ἐπιτίμησιν δεχομένοις, ἄκουσον ὅπως ὁ πεφυσιωμένος ἐκεῖνος τῷ ἁμαρτήματι, ὁ εἰς ἐσχάτην κακίαν ἐλάσας, ὁ πορνείαν πορνεύσας, οἷα οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὀνομάζεται, ὁ ἀναισθήτως ἔχων τοῦ τραύματος (τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν ὑπερβολὴ διαστροφῆς)· οὗτος δὲ ὁ

¹⁶²PG LXIII, 176-7.

¹⁶³PG LXII, 535.

¹⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 667.

¹⁶⁵PG LVII, 364.

τοιούτος οὕτω κατεκάμφθη καὶ συνεστάλη, ὥστε
τὸν Παῦλον εἰπεῖν· Ἀρκεῖ τῷ τοιούτῳ ἡ ἐπιτίμησις
αὕτη ἡ ὑπὸ τῶν πλειόνων· ὥστε κυρώσατε εἰς
αὐτὸν ἀγάπην.¹⁶⁶

Here we see again the identification of the offenders in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2, with the consequence that even serious sin is remissible. However, we also note Chrysostom's implication that things in the Church of his time are not as good as they were in Paul's time. Separation from the brethren is now not regarded as a serious problem. What is particularly important in the light of I Cor. 5:11 is that Chrysostom believes that Paul teaches a total exclusion from the Christian community as long as offenders remain unrepentant. Chrysostom's agreement with Paul is plain; what is not clear, however, is how much he is able to enforce the Apostle's teaching in Constantinople, where these homilies were prepared.¹⁶⁷

Verse 13: In Homily XVI, 1-2, Chrysostom notes that the words Ἐξαρεῖτε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν (I. Cor. 5:13) come from the Old Testament (Deut. 17:7), and that Paul thereby demonstrates that the removal of sinners from the midst of the congregation is no innovation; however, the punishment in the days of the Old Covenant was more severe. In those days, murder and adultery were immediately punished by death, which he sees as having a deterrent effect upon the rest of the community; but under the New Covenant, ἐὰν διὰ μετανοίας ἀπολούσωνται, διέφαγον τὸν κόλασιν. However, even in Old Testament times, David's double sin of adultery and murder was forgiven through his repentance, whereas Ananias and Sapphira, in New Testament times, perished; Chrysostom says that the difference of persons produces the difference of treatment adopted in each case.¹⁶⁸ He does not equate the cutting off of offenders from the community with the excommunication in the Church of his day, although it may be implied.

¹⁶⁶PG LXII, 496-7.

¹⁶⁷Quasten, *Patrology* III, p. 449.

¹⁶⁸PG LXI, 131-2.

Another important reference to 5:13 occurs in *Homily LVII*, 3 on the gospel of John. Chrysostom observes that, if all other measures fail to produce repentance in offending Christians, they must be cut off and cast away, as a rotten limb is amputated from the body. He then cites I Cor. 5:13 and 5:2, saying that such measures are absolutely necessary for the preservation of the rest of the body. He compares sin to λοιμὸς (plague) and ψώρα (scabies or mange), terminology which has been noted before.¹⁶⁹

These passages from the remainder of I Corinthians 5 show that John follows Paul closely; he is in favour of the excommunication of the offender, not only from worship, but also from Christian fellowship, until he or she repents. However, he is aware that there are times when the casting away must be permanent, but only when the offender is recalcitrant and refuses to amend his or her behaviour. At that point, a pastor's concern must be for the flock.

Chrysostom's other references to II Cor. 2:5-11 and I Tim. 1:20 which have ties to I Cor. 5:3-5 have already been treated in this paper in conjunction with that passage. This completes our survey of Chrysostom's use of I Cor. 5:3-5.

The monolithic character of Chrysostom's exegesis of this passage has already been noted; there is no variance in the major points. Paul definitely imposed excommunication on the offender, but when proper penitence had been shown, he recommended his restoration to the fellowship of the church. Where Chrysostom does not seem certain is in the matter of congregational participation. As noted above, his exegetical honesty makes him insist that there is a place for it, but to all intents and purposes, he regards the punishment as an indication of apostolic power. He goes beyond previous writers by suggesting that the punishment may involve more than excommunication, i.e., physical illness, but he makes no suggestion that such an

¹⁶⁹PG LIX, 314.

occurrence is known in the church of his day. His views of the punishment are couched in medical language, which is appropriate in the light of his belief that the suffering is meant to restore the sinner's health. His pastoral concern surfaces in his frequent references to the redemptive power of suffering in the Christian life; he wants his congregations to understand why suffering exists in this world. In spite of this, he does not soften the sharpness of the Pauline language; he expects the punishment to be harsh and unpleasant.

Chrysostom's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 raises some questions, however:

1) It is not clear whether he believes that the powers of the apostles were inherited by the clergy of his day. Lavish in his praise of the former, he is comparatively reticent about the power exercised by the latter, although he does make it clear that the clergy have a duty to excommunicate the unworthy. When he describes the importance of the assigning of penance to fallen Christians by priests, he does not make a complete equation of this with the apostolic power, although he obviously sees some sort of correspondence.

2) A much-argued question is whether Chrysostom approved of private penance. Martain and Galtier¹⁷⁰ have expressed their opinions that he did, but their views have met with strong disagreement in various quarters¹⁷¹. The survey seen above contributes nothing to this discussion. Chrysostom talks about the personal value of penance, but there is no passage which can be regarded as completely privatised. Chrysostom places value on the attitude of the penitent, but there is no indication that it is prescribed or administered privately.

3) Watkins compares Chrysostom's approach to penance with the harsh graded system of penance prevailing in Cappadocia, stating his belief that Chrysostom

¹⁷⁰P. Martain: "St. Jean Chrysostome et la Confession", *Revue Augustinienne* 6 (1907), pp. 460-2;
P. Galtier: "St. Jean Chrysostome et la Confession", *RSR* 1 (1910), pp. 209-40, 313-50.

¹⁷¹e.g., Quasten, *Patrology* III, p. 478; J. Turmel, "St. Jean Chrysostome et la confession", *Révue du Clergé français* 49 (1907), pp. 294-308.

is setting himself in deliberate opposition to the latter by a more gracious, individual approach that can shorten penance.¹⁷² In Watkins's favour is the fact that Cappadocia is not far from Antioch; against him is the fact that no one in Chrysostom's own time seems to have questioned his attitude toward penance. If it had been as revolutionary as Watkins claims, some voices of protest surely would have been heard. It may be safer to say that there were several ways of looking at penance, some more rigorous than others. Chrysostom's idea that the length of the time of penance can be shortened if the penitent makes real progress is reminiscent of the ideas on penance in the works of Clement of Alexandria and Origen; the same can be said of Chrysostom's statement that there are multiple methods of μετάνοια (the accusation of one's self, forgiveness of others, prayer, almsgiving, and humility),¹⁷³ which may be compared with Origen's statement that there are seven ways in which sin can be blotted out (baptism, martyrdom, almsgiving, forgiveness of others, conversion of sinners, the fulness of love, and penance).¹⁷⁴ There is similarity here, as well as in Chrysostom's interpretation of I Cor. 5:3-5 against the backdrop of contemporary penitential procedure. Chase has noted that this is one of Chrysostom's exegetical weaknesses: "Again, from time to time we have remarked a tendency to interpret the New Testament in accordance with later formulas and usages of Church life."¹⁷⁵ Chrysostom's exegesis is thus seen to differ from Theodore's, at least according to the latter's principle of treating the text apart from subsequent developments in the tradition of the Church;¹⁷⁶ This thesis has already shown that this is a fault not confined to Chrysostom; Origen finds it impossible to think of I Cor. 5 without

¹⁷²Watkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-6.

¹⁷³*De diabolo tentatore* II; PG XLIX, 263.

¹⁷⁴*Homily II* on Leviticus; PG XII, 417.

¹⁷⁵Chase, *Chrysostom, A Study in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, p. 192.

¹⁷⁶The difference between Theodore's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 in the surviving fragments of his commentary on I Corinthians and his remarks in his Treatise on the Eucharist and the Liturgy should be noted; cf. above.

thinking of the penitential structure of the Church of his day, and this has been echoed by subsequent writers already studied here. In reference to Chase's observation, Chrysostom does this sort of thing far less than Origen; his contextual approach to Scripture precludes some of the Alexandrian's identifications.

It is also true to say that Chrysostom in his treatment of I Cor. 5:3-5 says far less about the penitential procedure than Origen does. Chrysostom makes it clear that it means excommunication, with restoration as the goal, but it is only in his other works that we hear more about the system of penance which he favours.

In looking at this survey against the larger background of Chrysostom's works, three headings capture the view of Chrysostom which emerges: practicality, preacher, and pastor.

1) Chrysostom's practicality shows in his down-to-earth exegesis of a passage. He is always concerned that his audience should understand the Scriptures and employ them in their everyday lives. Donald Attwater has referred to the "outstanding quality of St John Chrysostom's always vigorous preaching, its direct practicality and objectivity."¹⁷⁷ He then adds:

He had not a speculative turn of mind, nor would speculation have appealed to his hearers, Greeks though they mostly were. They were ordinary people faced with the ordinary dangers of the world, aggravated by the particular corruptions of their time and place, and by the prevalence of insidious and plausible heresies, and so Chrysostom's preaching was in the main directed towards the strengthening of true faith and right living. It was to the personal life of the individual listener that he addressed himself, and his moral discourses still have a remarkable atmosphere of actuality; they are also very plain-spoken.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷Attwater, *St John Chrysostom*, p. 41.

¹⁷⁸*Ibid.*

It is probably this concern for the life of the individual that leads Chrysostom to bring a strong moralising element into his preaching. Von Campenhausen has noted that

Chrysostom did not contribute to the dogmatic elaboration of Christological theory nor take much interest in the academic disputes of the day in this field. What interested him was the rousing of men's hearts, the kindling of their moral energy, developing in them pure love and an unfeigned spiritual outlook...Practical and moral problems were paramount in his interpretation and application of the Biblical texts. His sermons contain a great deal of exhortation and moralizing.¹⁷⁹

Likewise, Attwater has noted that Chrysostom's greatness as a teacher was that of a "practical moralist".¹⁸⁰ Heinrich Kihn has noted, referring to the School of Antioch in general:

Ihre schriftstellerische Thätigkeit war vorzugsweise vom exegetischen Interesse beherrscht, jedoch so, daß die wissenschaftliche Exegese nicht Selbstzweck war, sondern zur Belehrung den Glaubigen, zum Aufbau des sittlichen Lebens und zur Bekämpfung des Unglaubens und Irrtums diente. Diese Tendenz liegt allen ihren exegetischen Werken, sogar die Commentaren, vor allem aber die Homilien des Chrysostomus zu Grunde, welchen in ihnen das exegetische und praktische Moment zu schönster Einheit verbindet.¹⁸¹

In contemporary parlance, Chrysostom would be referred to as a "hands-on" theologian; one who is not so much interested in theological abstraction as in seeing theological truths applied at every level of a person's life. Frances Young has noted that Chrysostom's emphasis on morality differs considerably from that of Origen, who thinks of morality in terms of abstract virtues, whereas Chrysostom emphasises exemplary deeds and character.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Greek Church*, pp. 144, 146.

¹⁸⁰Attwater, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

¹⁸¹Kihn, *Theodor von Mopsuestia und Julius Africanus als Exegeten*, p. 29.

¹⁸²Young, "The rhetorical schools and their influence on patristic exegesis", *The Making of Orthodoxy*, p. 191.

2) As a preacher, Chrysostom's practicality shows in his choice of words; his style is clear and straightforward, splendid but not overly complex. The great number of his homilies which have survived are a reminder that he preached in order to be understood by his hearers. This is one reason for the lack of theological speculation in his works; he wants to be understood by the ordinary Christian in the streets, and he preaches in such a way as not to lose his audience. Professor Young, noting Chrysostom's use of rhetoric, ties this in with Chrysostom's moralistic emphasis:

The propensity to draw morals from the text is most dramatically evidenced in Chrysostom's homilies...he tends not to burden his congregation with too much *methodiké*. However, expounding the *historia* is important; though not because it is historical, but because it is exemplary. Whatever he is commenting upon is turned into a moral lesson, an example, an exhortation...What is this then but the audience-oriented criticism of the rhetor, used now not to train budding declaimers to manipulate an audience, but to facilitate the appropriate moral response from the congregation? And where else did the constant moralizing come from but the educator's search for morally edifying examples?¹⁸³

3) As pastor, Chrysostom has numerous references to the danger of despair on the part of penitents when treating II Cor. 2:7; in particular, he notes the danger of such a one being swallowed up by his sorrow. Those in authority must dispense penance carefully, aware of the danger of driving the sorrowful ones too far. On the other hand, we have noted in Chrysostom's exegesis of I Cor. 5:7 that he firmly believes that laxity on the part of the priests is also dangerous. He strives to take an effective middle course, one which treats sin seriously (with excommunication) but which always has restoration in mind as the goal. Chrysostom's serious but gracious stance certainly stands out by contrast with the harsh and inflexible graded penances

¹⁸³Young, *op. cit.*

performed in Cappadocia, as Watkins has noted;¹⁸⁴ even if his idea that Chrysostom was deliberately setting up an approach in opposition to that is too extreme, it is safe to say that Chrysostom would not have favoured the system in operation in Cappadocia; it was one which gave no credit for spiritual progress on the part of the penitent. Chrysostom is concerned to bring about heartfelt penitence in his hearers; they will discover what the Church thinks is the appropriate penance once the heart is penitent, and Chrysostom prefers to concentrate on developing the appropriate spiritual attitude.

In summary, we see that John Chrysostom's views as to the exegesis of the Corinthian passage never vary; he believes that the suffering of the righteous is to make them better, and that the suffering of the wicked, through excommunication and restoration, is to have the same result.

III. SEVERIAN OF GABALA

Severian (d. after 408), bishop of Gabala (in Syria, near Laodicea) is best remembered for his part in the removal of John Chrysostom from Constantinople; once a friend of the great preacher, he became his bitter enemy, playing an important part in the events leading up to the Synod of the Oak (403), which deposed Chrysostom. The relevant passages from Severian's writings all occur in the surviving *catenae* of his commentary on I Corinthians. They have survived in a double recension; Quasten notes that one paraphrases St. Paul, while the other quotes him directly.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴*op. cit.*

¹⁸⁵Quasten, *Patrology* III, p. 486. *CPG* does not mention the problem of the double recension.

Οὐκ ἐπειδὴ γυναῖκα τὸν εἰρημένον τρόπον εἶχεν ἐκεῖνος, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐλλόγιμος ἦν, καὶ οὐχὶ ἐπένθουν ὅτι γυναῖκα τοῦ πατρὸς εἶχεν, ἀλλ' ἐπεφυσίωντο ὅτι εὐπαίδευτος ἦν· τὸ γὰρ πένθος αὐτῶν ἢ ἐχώριζε τὸν πορνεύσαντα ἐπιμένοντα, ἢ τοῦ πράγματος τὴν ἀτοπίαν ἐξώριζεν καὶ ἐπανήγεν αὐτόν.

Οὐχ ἀπλῶς ἐργασάμενον ἀλλὰ κατεργασάμενον· οὐ γὰρ συναρπασθεὶς ἔπεσεν, ἀλλ' ἔργῳ ἐχρήσατο τῷ κακῷ. καὶ πνεύματι δὲ παρῆναι λέγει συνψηφιζόμενος καὶ συνκατακρίνων--πνεῦμα δὲ τὸ χάρισμα λέγει--συναχθέντων σὺν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ Χριστοῦ. οἱ φυσιούμενοι ἐπὶ τῷ πορνεύσαντι διὰ τὴν ἐλλογιμότητα μέρος ἦσαν τοῦ παντός, πάντας δὲ πρὸς τὴν κατάκρισιν τὴν ἐπὶ τῇ πορνείᾳ συναχθῆναι καλεῖ.

Τὸ πνεῦμα οὐ τὴν ψυχὴν, ἀλλὰ τὸ χάρισμα ἔφασαν.

Ἵνα μὴ δόξη παραλόγως κινεῖσθαι καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς ὀργῆς ἐπάγει, ὅτι οὐ μόνον πορνεία ἀλλὰ καὶ τοιαύτη ἀκούεται παρ' ὑμῶν οἷα οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. καὶ μέγα φρονεῖτε ὅτι τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ κόσμου κεκαλλώπισθε. δέον πενθεῖν ἐπ' αὐτόν ὅτι πορνείαν οὐδὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις συνήθη τετόλμηκεν· τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ πένθος ἢ ἐχώριζεν τὸν πορνεύσαντα ἐπιμένοντα τῇ πορνείᾳ, ἢ αὐτὴν τὴν ἀτοπίαν ἐχώριζεν καὶ αὐτόν ἐπανήγαγεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῇ.

Οὐκ ἀπεργασάμενον εἶπεν ἀλλὰ κατεργασάμενον, κὰν τούτῳ ἵνα ἐμφάνῃ ὅτι πολλῇ παραμονῇ χρησάμενος εἰργάσατο τὸ κακόν, καὶ οὐ συναρπαγεὶς ἤμαρτεν ἵνα σχῇ καὶ ἀπολογία. καὶ ικανὸς μὲν ἦν καὶ μόνος ὁ ἀπόστολος κατακρίναι ἐκεῖνον, ἀλλὰ θέλει συμπήφους αὐτῷ γενέσθαι καὶ τοὺς Κορινθίους, ὅπως ἂν οὕτω καταρθεῖεν, χωρισθέντες τῆς τοῦ παρανόμου κοινωνίας, καὶ μάλιστα οἱ ἐπὶ παιδεύσει πεφυσημένοι. οὐχ ὥς ὑποβάλλων δὲ αὐτόν τῇ τοῦ σατανᾶ ἐξουσίᾳ τοῦτο ποιεῖ--ἢ γὰρ ἂν ἠὺφρανε τοῦτο ποιῶν τὸν σατανᾶν--ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ τῷ σατανᾶ εἰώθαμεν ἀνατιθέναι πάντα τὰ κατὰ τὸν βίον χαλεπά, οἷον νόσους, λύπας, πένθη, περιστάσεις ἐτέρας, ὥς καὶ αὐτὸς κελεύει τῷ σατανᾶ, τοῦτ' ἔστι ταῖς τοῦ βίου δυσκολίαις.

Ταῖς τοῦ βίου κακώσεσι παραδίδωσιν· τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν τὸ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός, οὐκ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ψυχῆς, ἵνα ἐκ τῶν συμβαινόντων τῷ σώματι διεγερθεὶς μετανόησῃ καὶ σωθῇ τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ πνεῦμα ὅπερ ἐστὶ τὸ χάρισμα· οὐ γὰρ ᾧδε τὴν ψυχὴν λέγει ὥς τῆς σαρκός μὲν οὐκ ἀντισταμένης, τῆς δὲ ψυχῆς μόνης σωζομένης.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, pp. 242-4.

The first thing to strike the reader's notice is Severian's remark (short recension) that the offender was well-educated (εὐπαίδευτος); in the long recension this becomes τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ κόσμου κεκαλλώπισθε. Severian's use of εὐπαίδευτος is reminiscent of Chrysostom's idea that the offender may have been a teacher or leader in the congregation at Corinth (cf. *Epistula II ad Olympiam*). Perhaps due to the fragmentary nature of these surviving comments, we do not know the source of his idea.¹⁸⁷

Another point of interest is Severian's mention of both ways of interpreting the Corinthian text. In both recensions, he mentions the excommunication of the one abiding in fornication, but he also says that the Corinthians should have exiled his unnatural behaviour and ἐπανῆγεν (long recension, ἐπανήγαγεν) him. This is much closer to the spiritualising, private interpretation which we have already noted, whereby we are all to cleanse ourselves of sin. Severian's understanding of ἐπανῆγεν/ἐπανήγαγεν is not clear; it can signify either to withdraw or to lead back. His concluding remarks in the passage from the long recension, cited above, incline me to choose the latter meaning, although he definitely believes in the excommunication of the offender.

Severian makes it clear that the offender's sin is not just a sudden lapse, but a deliberate commitment to evil (he notes the use by Paul of the intensive κατά in κατεργασάμενον); this is one of the reasons for Paul's severity. In addition to this, there is also the unnatural nature of the relationship involved, the fact that this situation is noised abroad (ἐλλόγιμος), and that some of the church members are still swollen with pride concerning the man's good education. Thus, severity is definitely called for. This overall coverage of the situation in Corinth reveals Severian to be a

¹⁸⁷Neither do we know the source for Chrysostom's idea; as mentioned above, he remains indefinite about those who have differing opinions; he refers to them as *τίνες*.

true member of the School of Antioch; he is concerned to exegete an entire passage carefully, in order to discern accurately what it means.

Similarity to Chrysostom appears also in Severian's statement (long recension) that Paul could have executed judgment by himself, but that he preferred to be one of the judging body, adding his vote and judgment to that of the congregation (cf. particularly Chrysostom's homilies on I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2 for a similar sentiment). However, Severian indicates that being forced to judge in such a fashion is good for those who have been puffed-up about the status of the offender; evidently being forced to judge will bring them back to spiritual reality. This is an emphasis different from any observed thus far.

Severian also resembles Chrysostom in implying that the sinner may receive something in addition to excommunication; he speaks of how it is common to attribute the evils of life to Satan, noting that Paul experienced something of this sort (II Cor. 12:7). Although he does not comment further, it is probable that he is thinking of some bodily punishment which the offender is to experience.

By far the most unusual thing that Severian has to say concerns the πνεῦμα. He first notes (short recension) that πνεῦμα δὲ τὸ χάρισμα λέγει. In the long recension, he says that the ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός is in order that σωθῇ τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ πνεῦμα ὅπερ ἐστὶ τὸ χάρισμα. Maurice Wiles has the following important observations on the use of πνεῦμα by the Antiochenes, and by Severian, in particular:

Severian gives the strongest expression to the principle which guided [the Antiochenes'] exegesis. Not only, in his view, should πνεῦμα not be taken to refer to man's spirit unless explicit indication to that effect is given; it should never be understood as a natural element in man at all. By nature man consists of body and soul; it is only the believer and never the unbeliever who can be described in threefold terms as body, soul and spirit. Spirit is never a natural element in man, but that does not imply that all references to spirit are references to

the gift (χάρισμα) of the Holy Spirit imparted to men.¹⁸⁸

From this statement, several things can be seen to apply in Severian's comments on I Cor. 5:3-5. Paul's being present in spirit is thus definitely a reference to the grace which the Holy Spirit gives, if not to the Holy Spirit himself. Severian views it as a supernatural occurrence. Secondly, the grace (or gift) of the Spirit is what is taken away from the impenitent offender; he becomes only ψυχικός. Severian thus sees the sentence imposed on the offender as necessary to prevent this from happening; μετάνοια is necessary. Paul's use of σωθῆ applies only to the πνεῦμα, and it now bears the sense of "to retain" or "to reserve"; as Severian notes, Paul's terminology is not properly applied to the ψυχή; rather, it should be said to be ἀνισταμένης, like the body.

In the surviving comments on I Cor. 5:6, Severian notes that the puffed-up ones were actually pleased that the offender's scandalous behaviour was known by others (short recension), and, while not holding to his offence, were φυσώμενοι because of his teaching (long recension).¹⁸⁹ Once again we note the similarity to Chrysostom, who suggests that the man may have been a teacher in the congregation at Corinth. Severian then notes (long recension) that Paul commands the expulsion of the offender, in order that the rest of the flock not be set shamelessly in motion (ὀρμήσωσιν ἀναιδῶς) toward sin, another of Chrysostom's emphases in his treatment of this verse (cf. above).

In his surviving comments on I Cor. 5:13, Severian remarks that Paul cites Deut. 17:7 in this verse to show that his command for the offender to be ἐκτέμνεσθαι is not a new one.

In a surviving comment on II Cor. 2:8-9, Severian paraphrases Paul as saying, Ὑπηκούσατέ μοι εἰς τὸ κατακρίναι, ὑπακούσατέ μοι εἰς τὸ ἀνακαλέσασθαι

¹⁸⁸Wiles, *The Divine Apostle*, p. 36.

¹⁸⁹Staab, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

αὐτὸν κατακριθέντα.¹⁹⁰ This implies an identification between the one who is to be forgiven and one already judged; given the near-unanimous understanding of the patristic writers, it is probably safe to say that Severian identifies the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2.

The fragmentary condition of much of the surviving sources on Severian make it impossible to say more concerning his exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5. Nevertheless, a considerable amount is revealed. His concern to capture the overall picture in vv. 1-2 has been noted. We also see that he views excommunication as necessary and thinks that it, with repentance, will preclude the taking away of the πνεῦμα. He is unusual in what he has to say about congregational participation in the judgment of the offender: it is to bring the πεφυσιῶμενοι down to earth. Paul could have executed the judgment by himself, but he desires to destroy the pride of those who were puffed up. Likewise, Severian's understanding of πνεῦμα is remarkable (although, as Wiles notes, it is characteristic of the entire School of Antioch¹⁹¹). The idea that πνεῦμα may apply either to the Holy Spirit or to an (added) quantity in human nature is unique, although a similar thought surfaces in Ambrosiaster (cf. below). One might think also of Tertullian's identification of the πνεῦμα as the spirit of the Church, neither the Holy Spirit nor the spirit of the offender; however, Severian goes further; the Holy Spirit is taken away from the offender and reserved in the Church, along with the "spiritual" nature which the Holy Spirit imparts. It is the presence of the Holy Spirit which makes one a tripartite being (body, soul, *and spirit*).

IV. THEODORET OF CYRRHUS

In his commentary on Galatians, J.B. Lightfoot wrote concerning Theodoret:

His commentaries on St. Paul are superior to his other exegetical writings, and have been assigned the palm

¹⁹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 282.

¹⁹¹Wiles, *op. cit.*

over all patristic expositions of Scripture. For appreciation, terseness, and good sense they are unsurpassed, and if the absence of faults were a just standard of merit, they would deserve the first place; but they have little claim to originality, and he who has read Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia will find scarcely anything in Theodoret which he has not seen before.¹⁹²

This verdict will be tested by the survey of Theodoret's use of I Cor. 5:3-5. His comments will be observed in the manner I have frequently utilised: beginning with his remarks on vv. 1-2, I will then examine his comments on vv. 3-5. After that, other passages in his works which may have bearing on his exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 will be studied. As with Origen, Theodoret's comments on I Cor. 5 in his surviving commentary on the Pauline epistles will be the starting point in each section.

A. VERSES 1-2

Theodoret's comments on these verses are as follows:

“Ὅλως ἀκούεται ἐν ὑμῖν πορνεία. Ἀποχρώντος ἐνέφηνε τὴν τῆς ἀτοπίας ὑπερβολήν. Οὔτε γὰρ ἀκούεσθαι τοῦτο, φησὶν, ἔδει. Δείκνυσι δὲ καὶ τῆς παρανομίας τὸ μέγεθος. Καὶ τοιαύτη πορνεία, ἥτις οὐδέ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὀνομάζεται. Ἄ γὰρ οὐ τολμῶσιν οἱ ταῖς τῶν δαιμόνων διδασκαλίαις ἐσχολακότες, τοῦτο τετόλμηται παρ’ ὑμῖν. Ὡστε γυναῖκά τινα τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχειν. Ἄξιον κανταῦθα τὴν ἀποστολικὴν θαυμάσαι σοφίαν. Οὐ γὰρ εἶπε μητρὶν, ἐπειδήπερ τινὰ δυσμένειαν ἐμφαίνει τὸ ὄνομα· ἀλλὰ τοῦ πατρὸς γυναῖκα, τουτέστι τὴν ἐν τάξει μητρὸς οὔσαν, τὴν ἀντὶ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ τῷ πατρὶ συναφθεῖσαν, τὴν τοῦτο τῷ γεννητορὶ γενομένην, ὅπερ ἦν ἡ τεκοῦσα. Εἶτα τοῦτον καταλιπὼν, κατὰ τῆς τούτου συμμορίας τὴν κατηγορίαν εἰσφέρει. (Verse 2:) Καὶ ὑμεῖς πεφυσιωμένοι ἐστέ. Μέγα γὰρ ἐφρόνουν, ὡς πεπαιδευμένον διδάσκαλον ἔχοντες. Καὶ οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἐπενθήσατε, ἵνα ἐξαρθῇ ἐκ μέσου ὑμῶν ὁ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο ποιήσας; Οὐκ ἐναντία νομοθετεῖ. Οὐ γὰρ εἶπε, Τί δήποτε οὐκ ἐξηλάσατε; ἀπηγόρευσε

¹⁹²From p. 226 of his commentary; cited by E. Venables in *A Dictionary of Christian Biography* IV, p. 917.

γὰρ ἄνω τὸ κρίνειν τοῖς διδασκάλοις· ἀλλὰ, Τίνος
 χάριν οὐκ ἐθρηνήσατε, τὸν θεὸν ἱκετεύοντες, ὥστε
 τῆς τοῦτου λώβης ἀπαλλαγῆναι;¹⁹³

Theodoret's remarks about Paul's refusal to call the woman μητρυιά are perhaps the first thing to catch one's attention. His idea that "stepmother" contains overtones of hatred, but that γυναῖκα τοῦ πατρός refers to a love such as that which exists between a mother and the child she bears, is unique among the writers studied in this thesis; this understanding certainly highlights the ἀτοπία¹⁹⁴ of the relationship. His reference to the πεφυσιόμενοι, who were conceited ὡς πεπαιδευμένον διδάσκαλον ἔχοντες is reminiscent of Chrysostom, who has noted that some think that the offender was actually a leader or teacher in the congregation at Corinth.¹⁹⁵ Theodoret evidently holds to this, since he asserts that the reason Paul does not say, Τί δῆποτε οὐκ ἐξηλάσατε is because he had previously prohibited the Corinthians to judge teachers (I Cor. 1-3). This endeavour on Theodoret's part to understand I Cor. 5:1-2 against the larger backdrop of the entire epistle demonstrates the great aim of the School of Antioch: to do contextual exegesis of Scripture in order to arrive at a correct understanding of its contents.

Theodoret has three other references to vv. 1-2 of the Corinthian text, all of which are important:

1) The first occurs in Book I of his commentary on the Song of Songs. Theodoret's treatment of this book is of particular interest, since he rejects Theodore of Mopsuestia's view that it is to be seen as Solomon's reply to those who objected to his marriage to the daughter of Pharaoh; Theodoret says that such a view is "not even fitting in the mouth of crazy women."¹⁹⁶ Quasten notes that Theodoret's

¹⁹³PG LXXXII, 260-1.

¹⁹⁴Severian also uses this word; cf. above.

¹⁹⁵i.e., in *Epistula II ad Olympiam*; cf. above.

¹⁹⁶cited in Quasten, *op. cit.*, p. 540.

interpretation of the Song of Songs makes ample use of Origen,¹⁹⁷ and Young has remarked that Theodoret accepts the Alexandrian's thesis that the book refers to the marriage of Christ and the Church.¹⁹⁸ Commenting on Song of Songs 1:5, in which the bride's brothers are angry with her, Theodoret asserts that the brothers are the proclaimers of divine truth, and their anger is due to the imperfect condition of the bride. To illustrate that sin exists within the Church, Theodoret then cites I Cor. 5:1; πορνεία was present in the church at Corinth.¹⁹⁹ This passage is important mainly because of its allegorical approach, something very unusual in the writers of the School of Antioch. G.W. Ashby has concluded that, by the fifth century, exegetical differences between Antioch and Alexandria were not as marked as they had previously been.²⁰⁰ This passage is a case in point, and it will also be noted in the very important citation, which follows.

2) The second passage occurs in Theodoret's exposition of Psalm 9:6 (LXX), which reads, Ἐπετίμησας ἔθνεσι, καὶ ἀπώλετο ὁ ἀσεβής· τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐξήλειψας εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος. Theodoret's approach to this text is similar to that in the preceding passage: God, he says, rebuked the nations through the voices of the apostles and the "criers of truth" who came after them. These presented the divine commands to the heathen, and thus the ungodly (ἀσεβής) perished, either because he was converted, his ungodliness being destroyed, or in reference to pagan idols (or idolatry, since ἀσεβής is singular), who perished through lack of worshippers. This passage is also important because it is almost a *verbatim* citation of the work of Didymus the Blind on the same psalm:

¹⁹⁷Ibid.

¹⁹⁸Young, *op. cit.*

¹⁹⁹PG LXXXI, 69-72.

²⁰⁰G.W. Ashby, *Theodoret of Cyrrhus as Exegete of the Old Testament*; cited by D.S. Wallace-Hadrill, p. 39.

Didymus:

Ταύτην ἔχει τὴν διανοίαν· Διὰ τῶν ἱερῶν ἀποστόλων, καὶ τῶν μετ' ἐκείνους τῶν τῆς ἀληθείας κηρύκων, προσήνεγκεν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν τὰ θεῖα διδάγματα· ἐκείνων δὲ δεξαμένων, καὶ τῆς πλάνης ἀπαλλαγέντων, ἀπώλετο ἀσεβής, τοὺς ἀπατωμένους καὶ προσκυνοῦντας οὐκ ἔχων. Οὕτω Βαρνάβας καὶ Παῦλος θῦσαι πειραθεῖσι Λυκάοσιν ἐπετίμησαν βοῶντες· τί ποιεῖτε, ἄνδρες; Καὶ ἡμεῖς ὁμοιοπαθεῖς ὑμῖν, ἐσμεν ἄνθρωποι, ἀπὸ τούτων τῶν ματαίων πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑμᾶς ἐπιστρέφοντες. Οὕτω Γαλάταις ὁ μακάριος ἐπετίμησεν Παῦλος βοῶν· Ὡ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος; Οὕτω Κορινθίους· Ὡς ἀκούεται ἐν ὑμῖν πορνεία, ἥτις οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὀνομάζεται; . . . Ἐπιτίμησας τοίνυν ἔθνεσιν, καὶ ἀπώλετο ὁ ἀσεβής, τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐξήλειψας εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος. Ἐσβέσθησαν γὰρ παντελῶς αἱ τελεταί, καὶ λήθη παντελεῖ παρεδόθησαν ὡς μηδένα τῶν νῦν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῆς ἀσεβείας μυστήρια.²⁰¹

Theodoret:

Ταύτην ἔχει τὴν διάνοιαν· Διὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων, καὶ τῶν μετ' ἐκείνους τῆς ἀληθείας κηρύκων, προσήνεγκες τοῖς ἔθνεσι τὰ θεῖα δόγματα· ἐκείνων δὲ δεξαμένων, καὶ τῆς πλάνης ἀπαλλαγέντων, ἀπώλετο ὁ ἀσεβής, τοὺς ἀπατωμένους καὶ προσκυνοῦντας οὐκ ἔχων. Οὕτω Βαρνάβας καὶ Παῦλος θῦσαι πειραθεῖσι Λυκάοσιν ἐπετίμησαν βοῶντες· Τί ποιεῖτε, ἄνδρες; καὶ ἡμεῖς ὁμοιοπαθεῖς ἐσμεν ὑμῖν ἄνθρωποι, ἀπὸ τούτων τῶν ματαίων πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑμᾶς ἐπιστρέφοντες; Οὕτω Γαλάταις ὁ μακάριος ἐπετίμησε Παῦλος· Ὡ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος; Οὕτω Κορινθίους· Ὡς ἀκούεται ἐν ὑμῖν πορνεία, καὶ τοιαύτη πορνεία, οἷα οὐδ' ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὀνομάζεται. Ἐπετίμησε τοίνυν ἔθνεσι, καὶ ἀπώλετο ὁ ἀσεβής, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐξήλειπεν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος. Ἐσβέσθησαν γὰρ παντελῶς τῆς ἀσεβείας αἱ τελεταί, καὶ λήθη παντελεῖ παρεδόθησαν, ὡς μηδένα τῶν νῦν ἀνθρώπων εἰδέναι τὰ τῆς ἀσεβείας μυστήρια.²⁰²

This passage shows the truth of Ashby's comments above; here there is not only a less marked difference between the schools of Antioch and Alexandria, but Theodoret is so impressed with the exegesis of this psalm by a confirmed Origenist that he uses it as his own. The spiritualising manner of interpreting is startling enough in the hands

²⁰¹PG XXXIX, 1189-90.

²⁰²PG LXXX, 924.

of a writer of the School of Antioch, even before one realises that it is copied from one of the most noted writers of the Alexandrian school of exegesis.

The borrowing is so close that the question must be asked whether this is actually Theodoret's work or the result of some later confusion. The *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* notes that there is uncertainty about the genuineness of the text. It must be remembered, too, that excerpts from a commentary on the Psalms which were included under the name of Diodore of Tarsus²⁰³ have been shown to be actually the work of Didymus the Blind.²⁰⁴ Robert Devreese has shown that there is also some textual ambiguity in the various MSS. containing this commentary.²⁰⁵ Against this must be placed the author's own claim in the preface that he had read a number of commentaries on the Psalms, some extremely allegorical, some extremely literalist, in their approach to the text. He expresses his intention to strike a middle course.²⁰⁶ M.-J. Rondeau has noted Theodoret's use of Didymus in other portions of this work on the Psalms²⁰⁷, but believes that the work is genuinely Theodoret's. Cardinal Mai, the editor of Didymus the Blind for Migne's *Patrologiae Graeca*, has noted where parallel passages occur not only between Didymus and Theodoret (including this one²⁰⁸), but also between Didymus and Origen (and Basil). In my own further examination of Theodoret and Didymus, I have found that Theodoret makes use of Didymus's comments on Psalm 2:9. He also follows Didymus in his understanding of the latter's exegesis of the title of Psalm 33 (LXX), although he completely restates the thoughts in his own words. Also, Lightfoot's observation above concerning Theodoret's lack of originality must be kept in mind, as well as Theodoret's

²⁰³In PG XXXIII.

²⁰⁴by L. Mariès; cf. the bibliography for his various articles on this topic in Quasten, *Patrology* III, p. 399.

²⁰⁵*Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible*, Vol. I., cols. 1135-7.

²⁰⁶PG LXXX, 587ff.; cf. Quasten, *Patrology* III, p. 540.

²⁰⁷Rondeau, "A propos d'une édition de Didyme l'Aveugle", p. 389.

²⁰⁸PG XXXIX, 1188-9.

allegorical approach to the Song of Songs. Thus, although this text raises problems, the current state of scholarship ascribes this to Theodoret, although cautiously, and with an awareness of the problems.

3) The third reference to I Cor. 5:1-2 occurs in Book V of Theodoret's *Haereticarum fabularum compendium*. This passage is very important, since it contains both a full reference to the Corinthian situation and also cites II Cor. 2 in this context. Theodoret is attacking the belief of those who believe that there is no forgiveness of sins following baptism (mentioning Novatian by name). His illustrations of forgiveness are Aaron, who was forgiven after making the Golden Calf, and David, who sinned grievously twice (Theodoret does not specify which occasions), but who was "healed through penitence" (διὰ μετανοίας ἰάσατο). He then continues:

Περὶ τοῦ ἐν Κορίνθῳ πεπορνευκότος τὶ ἂν εἴποιεν,
ὃς οὐ μόνον θείων μυστηρίων ἠξίωτο, ἀλλὰ καὶ
διδασκαλικοῦ ἐτετύχηκεν χαρίσματος; οὗ δὴ χάριν
ὥς ἐπὶ σοφῷ καὶ πεπαιδευμένῳ μέγα φρονούντων
τῶν ὑπ' ἐκείνῳ τελούντων, ὁ θεῖος Ἀπόστολος
κατηγόρησεν εἰπών· Καὶ ὑμεῖς πεφυσιωμένοι ἐστέ,
καὶ οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἐπενθήσατε, ἵνα ἐξαρθῇ ἐκ μέσου
ὑμῶν ὁ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο ποίησας. Ἀλλ' ὅμως καὶ
διδάσκαλον ὄντα, καὶ μεγίστην παρανομίαν
τετολμηκότα παραδοὺς τῷ Σατανᾷ, πάλιν αὐτὸν
ἐξήρπασε τῶν ἐκείνου χειρῶν, καὶ τῷ τῆς
Ἐκκλησίας ἀποδέδωκε σώματι. Γράφει δὲ οὕτως
ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ Ἐπιστολῇ· Ὡς δὲ τι χαρίζεσθε, καὶ
ἐγώ. Καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ εἶμι κεχάρισμαι, ὃ κεχάρισμαι
δι' ὑμᾶς.²⁰⁹

Theodoret then continues by referring to II Cor. 2:7 (μήπως τῇ περισσοτέρᾳ λύπῃ καταποθῇ ὁ τοιοῦτος), and adds that the teachers of the Church [of that time] had compassion in such fashion, since they were spiritual healers (ἱατροὶ πνευματικοί), saving the health of those who were going to ruin.

²⁰⁹PG LXXXIII, 549.

This passage shows that Theodoret makes the familiar identification of the offenders in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2. We also note his anti-Novatianist stance, since he states that there is forgiveness available even for serious sins. His statement that the offender was a teacher should be observed; this is the second such statement in his writings which has been noted, and it suggests his familiarity with the similar remarks of John Chrysostom²¹⁰. The medical terminology which Theodoret employs reveals that, as a true Easterner, he thinks of penitence in this category. There is one other point of interest in this passage: Theodoret cites John Chrysostom almost *verbatim* when he says that, after Paul had surrendered the offender to Satan, *πάλιν ἐξήρπασε τῶν ἐκείνου χειρῶν*. Chrysostom, in the conclusion to his homilies on Romans, says that Paul *πάλιν ἐξήρπασε τῶν ἐκείνου χειρῶν*.²¹¹

B. VERSES 3-5

1) Theodoret's remarks on v. 3 in his commentary on I Corinthians are very brief:

Ἐγὼ μὲν ὡς ἀπὸν τῷ σώματι, παρὼν δὲ τῷ
πνεύματι, ἤδη κέκρικα ὡς παρών. Μηδεὶς ὑμῶν
ἕτερόν τι βούλεται· ἐκφέρω γὰρ παραυτίκα τὴν
ψῆφον. Τὸν οὕτως τοῦτο κατεργασάμενον. Πάλιν
ἔδειξε τὴν τῆς παρανομίας ὑπερβολήν.²¹²

In addition to these meagre remarks, Theodoret, in his comments on Col. 2:5 (which also uses the "absent in body, but present in spirit" terminology), is discussing Paul's authority in Colossae, even though he had never been there; he cites I Cor. 5:3 as an example of Paul's authority through the Holy Spirit.²¹³ The authority, though spiritual, is real and powerful. He gives no indication as to whether he thinks that this

²¹⁰Both may depend on a third, unknown source.

²¹¹*Homily XXXII*, 4 on Romans; *PG LX*, 680.

²¹²*PG LXXXII*, 261.

²¹³*Ibid.*, 608.

power was reserved to the Apostles, or whether it is still present in the church of his day.

2) In his exposition on I Corinthians 5, Theodoret treats vv. 4-5 as a whole.

After a full citation of the text, he comments:

Φρίκης μεστὸν συνεκρότησε δικαστήριον. Πρῶτον γὰρ ἅπαντας ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Κυρίου συνήγαγεν. Εἶτα καὶ ἑαυτὸν εἰσήγαγε διὰ τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος χάριτος. Καὶ αὐτὸν δὲ τὸν Δεσπότην προκαθήμενον ἔδειξε, καὶ τὴν ψῆφον ἐκφέροντα, καὶ τῷ δημίῳ παραδιδόντα, καὶ ὅρους τιθέντα, ὥστε μόνον παιδεῦσαι τὸ σῶμα· τῇ γὰρ ψυχῇ τὸ ἐκ τῆς παιδείας κατασκευάζει φάρμακον ἀλεξίκακον. Πνεῦμα δὲ ἐνταῦθα οὐ τὴν ψυχὴν καλεῖ, ἀλλὰ τὸ χάρισμα. Ταῦτα γὰρ, φησί, πάντα ποιῶ, ἵνα τοῦτο ἐν αὐτῷ φυλαχθῇ ἕως τῆς τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἐπιφανείας. Διδασκόμεθα δὲ ἐντεῦθεν, ὥς τοῖς ἀφοριζομένοις, καὶ τοῦ ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ σώματος χωριζομένοις, ἔπεισιν ὁ διάβολος ἐρήμους εὐρίσκων τῆς χάριτος. Οὕτως αὐτὸν ἐκταμών, τοῦ γεγεννημένου τὴν αἰτίαν διδάσκει.²¹⁴

Perhaps the first thing to catch one's attention is Theodoret's use of δῆμιος to characterise the work of Satan; it will be remembered that this is one of Chrysostom's favourite ideas (e.g., *De diabolo tentatore* II, 4; *Homily V* on I Timothy). Satan is seen as the public executioner, vile in himself, but one who carries out God's will on serious offenders.

Theodoret's similarity both to Severian and to Chrysostom is seen in his use of the word ψῆφον to describe the judgment taking place, and more importantly in his description of Πνεῦμα here as referring to the grace (or gift) of the Spirit; Professor Wiles has noted the unique understanding of the term πνεῦμα by the Antiochenes, and this is a case in point;²¹⁵ "spirit" can only be predicated of the regenerate man, and his lack of repentance may result in his becoming ψυχικός rather than πνευματικός.

²¹⁴*Ibid.*, 261.

²¹⁵Wiles, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

However, Theodoret differs from Severian in thinking that this has already happened in the case of those who have been separated from the body of the Church; the penance is evidently to restore them to being πνευματικοί. Theodoret's remark that Paul had prepared a medicine for the soul of the offender reveals the medical understanding of penance which is uniform among the Eastern writers studied in this thesis.

Theodoret's description of the judgment scene, where Paul is present by the grace of the Spirit, and the Lord is present as Judge, is a vivid piece of writing; it is also unique, not only among the Antiochenes, but also among all the writers studied in this thesis. The "grace of the Spirit" here is evidently the power of the Holy Spirit enabling Paul to be really, if spiritually, present, able to take his part in the pronouncement of the judgment on the offender.

The man's σῶμα is to be disciplined (παιδεῦσαι). Theodoret does not view the ὄλεθρον as total or final. The reference previously cited (under the heading of Verses 1-2) from Book V of the *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* shows that Theodoret viewed the punishment as remedial, and his statement that Paul restored the man's *body* to the Church should be noted. In his exposition on I Corinthians, Theodoret says that the "spirit" of the man is to be kept in the Church (for future restoration) while his body is being disciplined; the punishment is seen to be restorative and it is also ἀλεξίκακον (preventive); since it is for the good of the "soul", Theodoret is presumably not thinking in terms of its being preventive for the rest of the congregation, but rather in terms of the punishment being a guard against a further return to evil on the part of the offender.

One other point should be noted: the final lines of the passage cited above uses the participle ἐκταμών, from the verb ἐκτέμνω. This verb can mean either "to cut out" or "to cut down". Since Theodoret shows his belief that such a punishment is temporary and restorative, the former meaning provides a better clue to understanding his exegesis of the Corinthian passage.

To fully grasp Theodoret's understanding of I Cor. 5:3-5, therefore, it is necessary to read both his commentary on the passage and the citation from the *Haereticarum fabularum compendium*.

C. OTHER VERSES IN I CORINTHIANS 5

Theodoret's only treatment of I Cor. 5:6 occurs in his commentary, in tandem with v. 7. His treatment of it is very different from that of Chrysostom, who definitely views it as being a command to segregate a serious offender for the sake of the members of the flock who are as yet uninfected. Theodoret takes a spiritualising, personalised view; all Christians are to remove evil from their own lives, individually.²¹⁶ This is an interpretation as old as Tertullian, and it has been observed to play a large part in Origen's exegesis of this passage; in the Latin Fathers, it will be seen to be a particularly important exegetical technique for Augustine (cf. below). However, it does not add further to our understanding of Theodoret's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5.

His other references to I Cor. 5 can be summed up briefly. V. 7 figures typologically in several places, as Theodoret contrasts the Old Covenant with the New, which has been inaugurated by the death of Christ (*Quaestiones in Octateuchem*, Chapter XII on Exodus;²¹⁷ *Eranistes*, Dialogue II;²¹⁸ *Commentary on Ezekiel*, chapter XLVIII.²¹⁹).

On I Cor. 5:9-11, Theodoret is very brief in his commentary; he only echoes Paul's order not to eat with a lapsed Christian (presumably an impenitent one).²²⁰ Two passages in the *Quaestiones in Octateuchem*, in the part treating Leviticus, cite v. 11. In his answer to Question XVI, he is discussing the laws pertaining to leprosy,

²¹⁶PG LXXXII, 262.

²¹⁷PG LXXX, 253.

²¹⁸PG LXXXIII, 173.

²¹⁹PG LXXXI, 1252; this passage also cites v. 8.

²²⁰PG LXXXII, 264.

and he remarks on the segregation of lepers from the community, saying that Christians who have fallen into sin are like lepers, who have lost their natural colour. The faithful Christians are to avoid them; Theodoret cites I Cor. 5:11 at this point, showing his full agreement with Paul on the shunning of impenitent offenders.²²¹ In Question XVII, in addressing the lepers' having their heads covered, Theodoret says that it was so that those who were uninfected could avoid leprosy themselves. We should do the same when we see Christians who are offenders. He cites I Cor. 5:11 at this point, once again showing his full approval of Paul's command.²²² Theodoret refers to I Cor. 5:11 once more in Book V of *Haereticarum fabularum compendium*. In a chapter concerning fornication, Theodoret produces a *catena* of texts against it, citing v. 11 here. He then refers to the Corinthian situation as a whole; Paul, on account of licentiousness (ἀκολασίαν), delivered the fornicator to Satan, saying that, if anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him (I Cor. 3:17).²²³ At first, this sounds as if Theodoret believes that the sinner will be destroyed, but it has been shown in earlier references that this is not the case; the punishment is to bring about healing and restoration.

Theodoret's only reference to I Cor. 5:13 occurs in his commentary on that epistle. He asserts that Paul's command to expel the offender was made necessary by the man's conduct.²²⁴

Thus, Theodoret's exegesis of the remaining relevant verses in I Cor. 5 sheds little further light on his understanding of vv. 3-5. The most interesting comments here are those on 5:6, since they show him taking a completely different tack in his exegesis of this verse from that of John Chrysostom.

²²¹PG LXXX, 321.

²²²*Ibid.*

²²³PG LXXXIII, 544.

²²⁴PG LXXXII, 264.

D. OTHER REFERENCES

1) The way in which Origen relates II Cor. 2:5-11 to I Cor. 5:3-5 has been the pacesetter for the understanding of the latter text in the writers of this period. His identification of the offenders mentioned in these two passages as being the same person is the normative view of subsequent writers in the period of time examined in this thesis. We have already seen that Theodoret makes the same identification; it is therefore remarkable that in his commentary on II Cor. 2, he makes absolutely no reference to I Cor. 5. It is presumably his desire to stick closely to the text which prevents him from asserting an identification which he has already been shown to hold; he is concerned to treat the text alone and is very cautious about making random insertions not explicit in the passage under consideration, even when we know that he believes them. If this is the case, his caution is exemplary and rare, since most of the writers examined in this thesis are so convinced of the identity of the offenders in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2 that they do not hesitate to treat it as an accepted fact.

2) Theodoret's comments on I Tim. 1:20 are more revealing. When he treats the blasphemy of Hymenaeus and Alexander, he observes that we do not know what their blasphemy entailed, but Timothy did know. Theodoret then adds:

Τῷ δὲ διαβόλῳ οὐχ ὡς ἀγαθῶν διδασκάλῳ παρέδωκε τούτους, ἀλλ' ὡς δημίῳ πικρῷ. Τούτου χάριν οὐκ εἶπεν, ἵνα παιδεύσῃ αὐτοὺς μὴ βλασφημεῖν, ἀλλ' ἵνα παιδευθῶσι μὴ βλασφημεῖν. Τοῦ γὰρ ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ σώματος χωρισθέντες, καὶ τῆς θείας χάριτος γυμνωθέντες, πικρὰς παρὰ τοῦ δυσμενοῦς ἐδέχοντο μάστιγας, καὶ νόσοις καὶ παθήμασι χαλεποῖς περιπίπτοντες, καὶ ζημίαις καὶ συμφοραῖς ἑτέραις. Ταῦτα γὰρ ἐκείνῳ φίλον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐπάγειν· ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἐχθρὸς ἐστὶ καὶ ἐκδικητής, κατὰ τὸν Προφήτην²²⁵ Ἐκείνους δὲ εἰκὸς ἦν παιδευομένους μεταβαλεῖν τὴν γνώμην, ὁρῶντας τὴν ἐκ τῆς βλασφημίας προσγενομένην

²²⁵Herveti (Latin translator for Migne) thinks that this refers to Ps. 8:6 (LXX).

This passage is highly reminiscent of John Chrysostom. For one thing, there is the concept of Satan as the δῆμιος; for another, Theodoret differentiates between Satan's being the author of the discipline and his being merely the agent of it in the providence of God. Chrysostom, in his fifth homily on I Timothy, says exactly the same thing (cf. above). Theodoret also thinks that the punishment may involve bodily illness and other misfortunes; Chrysostom also says this in his fifteenth homily on I Corinthians (cf. above). Likewise, Theodoret uses the term μάστιγας; Chrysostom uses the cognate verb μαστίξῃ. Theodoret's debt to the great preacher is obvious.

Theodoret also reveals his belief that the punishment, whatever it was, was remedial in nature. His emphasis that it definitely involves separation from the church should be noted. It is clear that he believes this, although he does not devote much time to discussing it; perhaps it was already a settled question in his day, so that he might consider it unnecessary to discuss further. In this, he is different from Chrysostom, who speaks frequently of the necessity for excommunication. Theodoret's remark that those who are separated from the church are denuded of divine grace reminds us again of the peculiar teaching concerning πνεῦμα in the Antiochene school.

In summary, Theodoret's comments relating to I Cor. 5:3-5 show an admirable caution. As noted above, he identifies the offender in this passage with the penitent man in II Cor. 2:5-11, yet he avoids stating this in his comments on the latter passage. He reveals a strict discipline in regard to the sacred text. Chrysostom's reverence for the Scriptures is equal to Theodoret's, but the former does not hesitate to mention frequently his identification of the two offenders. Perhaps some of Theodoret's caution may be explained by the fact that his commentaries and other works are not homilies, listened to by a large congregation of lay Christians; they are works to be

²²⁶PG LXXXII, 796-7.

read by the learned. Chrysostom's homilies are designed for preaching and for educating the laity, and he would have less hesitancy about using accepted church tradition as sermon illustrations.

Like Chrysostom, Theodoret reveals little of contemporary ecclesiastical practice; likewise, neither of them develops his own ideas of the relationship between the apostolic power to excommunicate or to impose a sentence, and that of the bishops of his own time.

His scrupulous attention to the text has been obvious in the passages examined here. Yvan Azéma has listed three reasons why the exegesis of the Scriptures is so important to Theodoret:

a) le souci de répondre aux sollicitations, pressant...d'amis désireux d'acquérir une meilleure intelligence des textes sacrés; b) la conscience très vive de son devoir de pasteur, oblige par la loi divine elle-même de permettre aux chrétiens d'approfondir leur foi en développant leur connaissance de l'Écriture...; c) aussi et peut-être surtout, la conviction qu'une juste interprétation de l'Écriture fournirait les arguments utiles à la lutte contre les hérésies et à la défense de l'orthodoxie.²²⁷

Point b) is important because it shows Theodoret following in the steps of Chrysostom, the pastor who is passionately concerned about the spiritual well-being of his flock.

Theodoret is most startling in his willingness to espouse Alexandrian methods of exegesis when he feels that it is appropriate. His throwing over of the views of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Song of Songs has been noted, and his bold copying of the work of a devout Origenist (Didymus) is a move that shows Theodoret as a man who is willing to do his own thinking and to abide by the results; this is also seen in his long hesitation in condemning Nestorius as a heretic. It will be remembered that

²²⁷*Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, Fascicules XCVI-XCVIII, 427.

he gave a grudging assent to this only at the last minute. In the light of this willingness to strike an independent note, although firmly within the bounds of the tradition of the Church (not merely the School of Antioch), I take issue with Bishop Lightfoot's sentiment expressed at the beginning of the section treating Theodoret in this chapter; Theodoret may say what has already been said, but his sources can be very startling indeed, and he is far from being merely a carbon copy of earlier Antiochene writers.

V. SUMMARY

The School of Antioch as a whole, in spite of significant variations, presents a fairly unified approach to the exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5. All the writers view the apostolic edict as resulting in some kind of punishment; all are agreed that excommunication is part of the punishment, and the last three fathers whose writings are examined in this thesis believe that it involves some sort of earthly difficulty in addition to the expulsion from the Church. They all agree that the punishment is remedial; it is to bring the sinner to repentance and restoration. All are emphatic in their belief in the apostolic power exercised by Paul; all are reticent concerning the amount of that power which may have been passed on to bishops and priests. Theodore and Chrysostom make it clear that the power of binding and loosing in relation to the Church is still to be exercised by the priests, but it is not obvious whether they believe that the clergy has inherited the full apostolic powers.

Due to their fidelity to the text, these writers treat Paul's punishment as taking place in a congregational context; there is absolutely no attempt on their part to take the text and transplant it into a monastic setting, as Basil has done. In spite of the Antiochenes' deep appreciation of monasticism, their exegetical strictness precludes such treatment of the text. Certainly this study has shown that the reputation of the Antiochene school as being strong in historico-grammatical exegesis is well deserved. The one who moves slightly away from this is Theodoret.

What is very striking is the similarity which emerges in the deductions of the Antiochenes and the Alexandrians, in spite of the vast historical differences separating them exegetically. Writers in both schools make the identification of the offender in I Cor. 5 with the penitent man in II Cor. 2. Consequently, they all affirm the possibility of forgiveness even for flagrant sins. Of course, both schools are also reflecting the growing tradition of the Church, and while it is not acknowledged even by the later Alexandrians, both schools reflect the powerful seminal influence of Origen, who was the first extant writer to make the explicit identification of the figures in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2. Even Origen's choice of words has survived in the treatment of the text by the writers of both schools; *μάστιγας* and *δήμιος* are two examples. Where the Antiochenes differ is in their understanding of *πνεῦμα* and in their closely contextual approach to Scripture, which precludes any citation of unanchored texts to prove their arguments.

What is perhaps the point of greatest interest in the exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 by the Antiochenes is their treatment of *πνεῦμα*. Whereas Origen and the later Egyptians are quite convinced that the spirit which is to be saved is the spirit of the offender, Theodore, Severian, and Theodoret all imply that, while that may be the case (and they think that it is), Paul's reference is actually to the Holy Spirit, which is lost by the offender's sin, and which is reserved in the Church; when the sinner has repented and returned to obedience, he will receive the Holy Spirit once again. Among the Antiochenes, Severian's belief that the unregenerate man is only body and soul (*ψυχικὸς*), but that the regenerate man also has a spiritual element added to him, so that he is *πνευματικός*, is the most extreme treatment of *πνεῦμα* in connection with the Corinthian text. As will be seen in the next chapter, Ambrosiaster is in agreement with this stance, approaching Theodore of Mopsuestia the most closely, and this will raise questions about Ambrosiaster's knowledge of Greek, as well as the tradition of the Eastern Church.

One more thing must be emphasised about the Antiochenes, and that is their practicality. It is perhaps most obvious with Chrysostom, but it characterises the entire School. Its members were concerned about the everyday life of the Church in the world. Swete, in his observations on Cyril of Alexandria, has remarked:

Yet as a positive theologian he ranks higher than the Antiochenes; it is to his writings rather than to those of Chrysostom or Theodoret that we turn for precise definitions of the orthodox belief.²²⁸

This passage not only highlights Cyril's value, but it also captures the Antiochene spirit (by default) as essentially practical. Although Theodore of Mopsuestia is of a more speculative turn of mind, even he reveals his concern about the practical application of his theories, as can be seen in his recently discovered *Catechetical Homilies*. If the school of Alexandria reminds us of the need for careful study and definition of the faith, the Antiochenes remind us of the necessity for the study of the foundation documents and the application of the results at the everyday level of life in this world.

²²⁸Swete, *Patristic Study*, p. 108.

Chapter 6

LATIN WRITERS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

This chapter will examine the exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 by Latin writers of the fourth century: Pacian of Barcelona, Ambrose of Milan, and Ambrosiaster¹, in this order, which is roughly chronological. We are unsure of Ambrosiaster's dates, but the latter half of the fourth century seems to be likely², and although Pacian died roughly a decade before Ambrose, he was very old at the time; Jerome, whose dates partially overlap those of Ambrose, was acquainted with Pacian's son.³ Therefore, in spite of the nearness of their deaths, Ambrose (d. 397) represents the generation after Pacian; I will therefore begin with the latter.

I. PACIAN OF BARCELONA

A. In chapter 17 of his third epistle to Simpronianus, Pacian, criticising the Novatianists' refusal to grant forgiveness for serious sins, refers to I Cor. 5:11 and 5:13. He notes their use of Matt. 5:20 (*Quod si manus tua vel pes tuus scandalizaverit te...*). He cites Deut. 13:6, an exhortation to the Israelites to kill even their nearest and dearest family members if the latter are enticing them into the worship of idols and then continues:

Vides ergo, non de paenitentibus dictum, sed de his qui non solum ipsi in facinore perseverant, verum etiam nos scandalizare non desinunt. Hi quamlibet clari sint, relinquendi: quamlibet utiles deserendi sunt. Proponis adhuc dixisse apostolum Paulum: **Auferte malum ex vobis ipsis** [I Cor. 5:13]: malum utique, perseverans. Caeterum, paenitentia malum non est, cum David dicat: **Bonum est exomologesim facere Deo** [Ps. 111:2, LXX]. Nec tamen mecum est ille quem paenitet, nec parte sanctorum, nec pace conjungitur. Sed dicit Apostolus: **Si quis frater nominatur, et sit aut**

¹These all flourished before 400; they are the only writers from this period to cite the Corinthian text.

²Mara, "Ambrosiaster", *Patrology* IV, p. 180.

³*De viris illustribus* 106.

fornicator, aut simulacris serviens, aut avarus, aut maledicus, aut ebrius, aut rapax, cum ejusmodi nec cibum sumere [I Cor. 5:11]. Vides non sine causa esse positum, *et sit*, id est, qui necdum paeniteat, qui necdum improbus esse desierit...⁴

Pacian's stance is already visible: those who deliberately continue in sin are to be punished, but those who are properly penitent are to be restored. Rather than something that damages the Church, true penitence is to be valued, and the system which provides it is something good. We should note that *malum* in the first citation of the text is construed as neuter. Pacian is concerned that Christians rid themselves of evil in their lives; thus, he is thinking of a personal, individual cleansing, rather than of the expulsion of a serious offender.

In chapter 18 of the same epistle, Pacian cites the Corinthian text, which was evidently quoted by his Novatianist opponents as supporting their stance; he then appends his own interpretation:

Ipse ego quidem absens corpore, praesens autem spiritu, jam judicavi eum qui tale facinus admisit: in nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi, congregatis vobis omnibus in virtute Dei, tradere ejusmodi satanae, in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus sit in die Domini [I Cor. 5:3-5]. Nota, frater, primum, quod non damnat eos cum quibus iste communicat: solus ipse qui tale facinus admiserat, satanae traditur, solus excluditur, salva pace sanctorum. Vos, omnes ecclesias pro uno peccatore damnatis? Deinde vides, quod hic ipse peccator incestus, non morti traditur, sed satanae, ad emendandum, ad colaphizandum, ad paenitendum. Denique ait, **Ad interitum carnis**, non tamen animae, non etiam spiritus: sed ad solius carnis interitum, tentationes scilicet, carnis angustias, detrimenta membrorum, sicut alibi de intemperantibus dicit: **Tribulationem autem carnis patientur ejusmodi [I Cor. 7:28].** Vis hoc scire? in secunda Corinthiorum, hunc ipsum impium idem Paulus absolvit. Nam de ipso ait: **Sufficit illi qui ejusmodi est, objurgatio ea quae fit a pluribus; ut e contrario magis donetis et**

⁴PL 13, 1075.

consolemini, ne forte maiore tristitia absorbeatur, qui ejusmodi est: Propter quod obsecro vos, ut constituatis in eum charitatem [II Cor. 2:6-8]. Item infra: Si cui autem aliquid donastis, et ego: nam et ego quod donavi, propter vos in persona Christi, ut non possideatur a satana [v. 10]. Vides Apostoli indulgentiam, proprias etiam sententias temperantem? Vides mitissimam lenitatem longe a vestro supercilio separatam? longe a Novatiani fronte dissimilem, communi vero vitae ac saluti omnium consulentem?⁵

In his summary of the contents of Pacian's letters to Simpronianus, Simonetti has said:

...the weight of Pacian's argument is brought to bear above all on the innumerable New Testament passages which, in opposition to the few advanced by his adversaries, assure the pardon of the sinner, not whose death, but whose conversion and life is desired...To the merciless rigidity of the Novatians [*sic*], Pacian opposes a more comprehensive and balanced conception of man, whose weakness easily gives in to sin, but precisely to whom penance assures purification and the return to the church.⁶

The truth of Simonetti's statements can be seen in the passages cited above, which reveal a considerable amount concerning Pacian's exegesis of the Corinthian text. First of all, it is obvious that he makes this familiar identification: the sinner of I Cor. 5 is the penitent of II Cor. 2. Given that identification, it is not surprising to see Pacian deducing that even serious sins can be forgiven by the Church. However, the offender must undergo excommunication, but Pacian thinks that there will be some sort of physical punishment in addition to the expulsion from the Church; his description seems to refer to ill health of some sort (*angustias, detrimenta membrorum...*) In this thinking, he agrees with Chrysostom and Theodoret (cf.

⁵*Ibid.*, 1075-6.

⁶Simonetti, "Pacian", *Patrology* IV, pp. 136-7.

above). He sees no difficulty in having contact with the penitent offenders who are undergoing *exomologesis*; it is the impenitent who are to be shunned.

Pacian is emphatic in his insistence that the punishment has a medicinal and remedial purpose; the offender is to be restored to spiritual health by it. In this stance he joins the Greek fathers who have already been studied in this thesis. However, a distinctive twist appears in his writings; due to the rigorist position of his Novatianist opponents, Pacian insists that the restoration of a flagrant offender to fellowship with the Church will in no way damage the purity of the Church.

B. Pacian's other reference to I Cor. 5 occurs in his *Paranaesis ad paenitentiam*, which was called forth, Simonetti notes, by the increasing membership of the churches; members were more and more liable to fall into sin; consequently, "the penitential practice was becoming of essential importance in the life of the community."⁷ In chapter 10 of the *Paraenesis*, Pacian says:

Admovebo adhuc ignes de cauterio apostolico:
videamus an ferre possitis. **Judicavi, inquit,
congregatis vobis et spiritu meo, in virtute Domini
Jesu Christi, tradere ejusmodi hominem satanae in
interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus sit in diem
Domini [I Cor. 5:3-5]. Quid dicitis, paenitentes? Ubi
est vestrae carnis interitus?**⁸

Pacian continues by contrasting the luxurious life-style of would-be penitents with the sackcloth and ashes of Daniel when he was confessing the sins of Israel (Dan. 9:5), and with the utter seriousness of Azariah when he *exomologesim faciebat* to God with his companions (Dan. 3:25, LXX), and of David, who washed his pillow with tears each night when he was penitent (Ps. 6:7). He encourages penitents to

flere in conspectu Ecclesiae, perditam vitam sordida
veste lugere, jejunare, orare, provolvi: si quis ad
balneam vocet, recusare delicias: si quis ad convivium

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁸*PL* XIII, 1087.

roget, dicere: Ista felicibus, ego deliqui in Dominum, et periclitor in aeternum perire: quo mihi epulas, qui Dominum laesi? Tenere praeterea pauperum manus, viduas obsecrare, presbyteris advolvi, exoratricem Ecclesiam deprecari, omnia prius tentare quam pereas.⁹

Although the reference to the Corinthian text is brief, the concluding passages show us that Pacian interpreted it (in part, at least) as being reflected in the penitential practice of the Church of his day. Simonetti has rightly said of the *Paraenesis ad paenitentiam*:

This work of Pacian brings into sharp focus the fundamental difficulty which constituted the obstacle to the practice of post-baptismal penance: many Christians did not feel capable of facing public penance because of the notoriety it conferred on the public sinner.¹⁰

The passage cited above demonstrates this. As such, it complements his statements in the epistle to Simpronianus. In that context, we find Pacian strongly upholding the availability of full forgiveness and restoration to the Church; in the *Paraenesis* he is emphatically insisting on the absolute necessity of penance, no matter what the cost may be. To use twentieth-century terminology, while Pacian strongly affirms a full forgiveness of post-baptismal sin, he is no proponent of "cheap grace". This passage shows him adopting a personal/spiritual interpretation of the *interitum carnis*¹¹, which is described here in terms of self-abasement in respect to luxury and self-esteem; this is a different emphasis from that in the *Epistle*, where he implies that physical discomfort (in the sense of ill health) will accompany excommunication. What Pacian says here is strongly reminiscent of the description of *exomologesis* in such writers as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Tertullian. His use of that term in both works cited here (although the first one occurs in a scriptural quotation) is probably indicative of his understanding of I Cor. 5:3-5.

⁹*Ibid.*, 1088.

¹⁰Simonetti, *op. cit.*

¹¹He also does this in the *Epistle*; cf. above.

There are obvious silences in Pacian's references to the Corinthian passage. Although he seems to believe that the power to deliver to Satan is still resident in the Church, he does not say whether he views the bishops as full heirs of this apostolic power. We are given no idea as to how the sentence was first pronounced, or whether Pacian makes any distinction in his thinking between what Paul did and what the Church of his own day was doing when they delivered flagrant sinners to Satan. We have already noted his firm belief that full forgiveness of sin is available in this life, and results in restoration to the Church. In spite of his firmness in insisting that those who need the penitential procedure should take it seriously, Pacian is perhaps better remembered for his defence of a full forgiveness in this life. J.N.D. Kelly summarises this teaching well when he notes Pacian's claim, "that a constructive attitude to sinners accords best with the spirit of the Gospel, and that in principle all sins can be remitted".¹² Pacian's own words are, "Can it be that the serpent has so lasting a poison, and Christ no remedy?"¹³

II. AMBROSE

Ambrose rarely refers to I Cor. 5:1-2 out of connection with vv. 3-5; I will therefore examine his allusions to vv. 1-2 along with the latter passage as much as possible. It is perhaps not surprising to find that the Milanese bishop's most thorough treatment of the Corinthian passage occurs in his work *De paenitentia*.¹⁴ His teaching there will be examined at length before we proceed to his remaining writings which use I Cor. 5:3-5.

A. Ambrose's first references to the Corinthian passage in this work occur in Book I, chapter 13; however, just before this chapter begins, he makes a statement which sets the tone for the ensuing chapter, as well as giving a clear idea of his

¹²Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 437.

¹³cited by Telfer, *The Forgiveness of Sins*, p. 75-6, from *PL XIII*, 1056 (*Ep. I*, 5).

¹⁴Although this is not the case with Chrysostom, who rarely refers to I Cor. 5:3-5 in his work given the same Latin title.

understanding of the Corinthian text. He cites Heb. 12:6 (*castigat omnem filium deus, quem recipit*), then notes: *Et quem castigat, morti utique non tradit, quia scriptum est: Castigans castigavit me dominus et morti non tradidit me.* He continues (chapter 13) by saying that Paul teaches that the ones who have committed a sin unto death (*peccatum ad mortem*) must not be deserted, *sed potius lacrimarum panibus et potu coercendos flebili, ita tamen, ut ipsa moderata esset tristitia.* He then refers to II Cor. 2:7 (*ne forte abundantiore tristitia absorbeatur*).¹⁵

Ambrose's direct statement that God does not desire the death of the penitent is reminiscent of Pacian's remark in chapter 18 of his third epistle to Simpronianus (cf. above), in which he notes that the sinner is handed over to Satan, not to death. The Milanese bishop is already making his position clear: penance is to bring about the restatement in grace of a fallen sinner. His reference to the *lacrimarum panibus et potu coercendos flebili* probably has the practice of *exomologesis* behind it; it matches the description we have seen in the works of Tertullian and Pacian. The rod which Paul mentions (I Cor. 4:21) is a good thing, since the beating with a rod liberates a son's soul from death (Prov. 23:14).

The ensuing section is even more important:

Quid esset in virga venire, docet invectio fornicationis, accusatio incesti, repraehensio tumoris, quod inflati essent, quos magis lugere oporteret, postremo condemnatio rei, ut tolleretur a consortio communionis et traderetur adversario, non ad interitum animae, sed carnis. Sicut enim dominus in animam sancti Iob potestatem non dedit, sed in carnem eius permisit licentiam, ita et hic traditur **satanae in interitum carnis**, ut serpens terram eius lingeret, animae non noceret.¹⁶

Ambrose's description of the Corinthian situation sticks close to the text; here we see the mention of fornication, the accusation of incest, the censure of pride, and the

¹⁵*De paenitentia* I, 13, 58-9; CSEL LXXIII, p. 147.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, I, 13, 60; p. 148.

surrender of the guilty (*rei*) to the adversary. The reference to Job is reminiscent of Chrysostom, who so frequently uses the story of Job in conjunction with the Corinthian text, especially when he desires to explain the reason for suffering in the life of the believer (cf. above). Ambrose does not say, although it is perhaps implied, that he envisions some sort of physical castigation (in addition to excommunication) to occur in the life of the offender; the serpent is to lick his flesh (probably implying physical damage), although the offender's soul will not be hurt by the event.

After speaking of the value of buffeting one's self (I Cor. 9:27) in Christian discipline (section 61), Ambrose (section 62) explains what he thinks the *interitum carnis* is:

Quia temptator noster diabolus est; nam debilitates membris singulis inferre et aegritudines toto solet movere corpori. Denique percussit sanctum Iob ulcere malo a pedibus usque ad caput, quia in potestatem acceperat interitum carnis eius dicente deo: **Ecce trado tibi eum, tantummodo animam eius custodi** [Job 2:6]. Hoc isdem verbis apostolus transtulit dicens, quod tradiderit **huiusmodi hominem satanae in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus sit in die domini nostri Iesu Christi**. [Section 63:] Magna potestas, magna gratia, quae imperat diabolo, ut se ipse destruat. Se enim destruit, cum hominem, quem temptando supplantare studet, ex infirmo fortiolem efficit, quia, dum carnem debilitat, mentem eius conroborat. Aegritudo enim carnis peccatum repellit, luxuria autem carnis culpam adolet.¹⁷

In the following sections, Ambrose pursues this train of thought, saying that the devil is made sport of (*inluditur*) by Paul, since his assaults have exactly the opposite result of what he intends. Alluding to Isa. 11:8 (the child putting his hand on the serpent's den), the bishop says Paul makes a spiritual antidote from the poison, so that *quod*

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 149.

venenum est, medicamentum fiat. Venenum est ad interitum carnis, medicamentum fit ad salutem spiritus; quod enim nocet corpori, iuvat spiritum [Section 65].¹⁸

This remarkable passage could not demonstrate more clearly Ambrose's belief in the remedial power of penance. His view of it as medicinal is strongly reminiscent of the Greek fathers from Clement to Theodoret. His appreciation of Origen's multiple-sense understanding of the Scripture has been noted;¹⁹ a passage such as this shows that it is not only methods of exegesis which Ambrose has adopted from the Eastern church, but also his understanding of penance. His observation that the devil is inadvertently working out God's plan in the lives of penitent offenders is strongly reminiscent of his near contemporary, John Chrysostom, and his remark that an antidote is fashioned from the poison of Satan is parallel to the remark in the [possibly genuine] *Commentary on Isaiah* included in the Basilian corpus. Aside from the Latin language, this whole passage has a decidedly Eastern slant, which is a reminder that the West was slower than the East in defining its understanding of penance. Ambrose's remark that soft living is dangerous to the Christian life, whereas illness in the body assists it, reflects the bishop's asceticism. Ambrose, like Chrysostom and Theodoret, believes that a physically debilitating punishment will be added to excommunication in the life of the offender; with the exception of Tertullian, who in *De pudicitia* suggests that the offender actually died, the teaching that I Cor. 5:3-5 refers to excommunication plus physical suffering in the form of illness does not surface until the generation of Ambrose and Chrysostom. Another point of similarity between these two is in their pastoral concern; the story of Job is cited precisely because it will help struggling Christians to see that their suffering is remedial and/or helpful.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 150.

¹⁹e.g., by Maria Grazia Mara, *Patrology* IV, p. 153.

B. In Book I, chapter 15, Ambrose's teaching on I Cor. 5 is quite clear. Referring once again to the possibility of Paul's coming to Corinth with a rod (I Cor. 4:21), he says [Section 78]:

Bonus itaque doctor, dum promittit alterum de duobus, utrumque donavit. Venit **in virga**, quia a communione sacra convictum removet--et bene dicitur tradi satanae, qui separatur a Christi corpore--, venit etiam **in caritate spirituque mansuetudinis**, vel quia sic tradidit, ut spiritum eius salvum faceret, vel quia eum, quem ante sequestraverat, postea sacramentis reddidit. [Section 79:] Nam et sequestrari oportet graviter lapsum, ne **modicum fermentum totam massam** conrumpat, et expurgandum est vetus fermentum, vel in singulis vetus homo, hoc est exterior homo cum actibus suis, vel in populo inveteratus peccatis vitiisque concretus. Et bene dixit expurgandum, non proiecendum; quod enim expurgatur, non totum iudicatur inutile--ideo enim purgatur, ut utile ab inutili separetur--, quod autem proicitur, nihil in se utile habere creditur. [Section 80:] Iam tunc igitur apostolus reddendum sacramentis iudicavit caelestibus, si purgari se ipse vellet. Et bene ait **expurgate**; velut operibus enim quibusdam totius populi purgatur, et plebis lacrimis abluitur, qui orationibus et fletibus plebis redimitur a peccato et in homine mundatur interiore. Donavit enim Christus ecclesiae suae, ut unum per omnes redimeret, quae domini Iesu meruit adventu, ut per unum omnes redimerentur.²⁰

Ambrose once again emphasises that he regards the offender of I Cor. 5 to be the same man whom Paul counseled the Corinthians to restore in II Cor. 2. His remark, that to be separated from the body of Christ is truly to be surrendered to Satan, should be noted; he evidently makes it in reference to the Eucharist, since shortly after that, he says that Paul restored the man to the sacraments.

His treatment of I Cor. 5:6-7 (the purging of the old yeast, which is necessary, since a little yeast will leaven the entire loaf) reflects the multiple-sense understanding

²⁰*De paenitentia* I, 15, 78-80; CSEL LXXIII, pp. 156-7.

of Scripture. Ambrose says that it can mean the expulsion of an offender from the communion, or it can refer to what each Christian must do: expel the leaven of evil behaviour from his or her own life. Thus, he mentions both an ecclesiastical purging and an inner/personal cleansing.

What is of particular interest in the passage cited above is the amount of space Ambrose devotes to describing the place of the congregation in the restoration of the offender. Once again, this is reminiscent of Origen's writings; the Alexandrian teacher, in his description of *exomologesis*, says that penitents should request the prayers of the faithful for them. Chrysostom also implies (Homily XV on I Corinthians) that the congregation has a part, but Ambrose is far more explicit here. In the ensuing paragraph (Section 81), he goes even further, saying that the congregation should bear the burden of the offender as its own, suffering with him by weeping, prayer, and sadness; they may thus be further purged of the old leaven remaining in them.²¹ He ties this in with the parable of the woman who hid leaven in the flour (Lk. 13:21). *En passant*, he refers to I Cor. 5:7b (*Etenim pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus*), noting that the Lord's suffering has given redemption to sinners. He then accuses the Novatianists of companying with those Corinthians who caused Paul grief by not receiving the penitent man back into their fellowship; he says that they are like those puffed-up ones whom Paul rebukes in I Cor. 5:2.²²

C. The final chapter of Book I of *De paenitentia*, chapter 17, has several references to the Corinthian situation. In Section 93, Ambrose once again refers to II Cor. 2:10-11, implying that the man referred to is the same man who was to be excommunicated in I Cor. 5:3-5. In Section 94, the bishop refers to I Cor. 5:9-11, applying Paul's injunction to the impenitent. In Section 95, Ambrose refutes the

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 157.

²²*Ibid.*, pp. 158-9.

Novatianists' understanding of I Cor. 5:5, to which they hold as a support for their rigorism:

Ac ne quis forte eo moveatur, quia scriptum est: **Tradidi huiusmodi hominem satanae in interitum carnis**, et dicat: "Quomodo potuit ad veniam pertinere, cuius omnis interierit caro, cum manifestum sit in utroque redemptum hominem in utroque salvari, neque animam sine carne neque carnem sine anima, cum sibi sint gestorum operumque consortes copulatae, sine consortio vel poenae esse vel praemii?"--is sibi responsum hoc habeat, quod interitus non consummatam absumptionem carnis significet, sed castigationem. Sicut enim mortuus peccato deo vivit, ita inlecebrae carnis intereunt et cupiditatibus suis moritur caro, ut castitati ceterisque bonis operibus revivescat.²³

This passage is extremely important, since it shows Ambrose's understanding of what the *interitum* is; it is not total physical destruction, but punishment. It is a destroying of the lusts of the flesh; it is a death *to*, not because of, lust. It is surgical, meant to restore the offender to the path of good works and chastity.

Book II of *De paenitentia* contains two references to I Cor. 5. One is typological; in chapter 3, Ambrose is discussing the parable of the Prodigal Son, and he says that, instead of the fatted calf, Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us (I Cor. 5:7b).²⁴ The other reference occurs in chapter 7:

Faetebat Corinthia domus, quando scriptum est de ea: **Auditur inter vos fornicatio, qualis nec inter gentes** [I Cor. 5:1]. Faetor erat, quia modicum fermentum totam massam corruperat [I Cor. 5:6]. Coepit bene olere, cum dicitur, **Si cui quid donastis, et ego; nam et ego quod donavi, propter vos in persona Christi** [II Cor. 2:10]. Itaque liberato peccatore factum est in ea gaudium magnum et redoluit domus tota suavitate gratiae. Unde bene conscius, quod omnes apostolicae

²³*Ibid.*, pp. 162-3.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 171.

remissionis perfudisset unguento, ait: **Christi bonus odor sumus deo in his, qui salvi fiunt** [II Cor. 2:15].²⁵

Thus, we see that Ambrose's conviction, that the offenders of I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2 were the same man, never wavers. With his study of the Greek writers such as Basil and Origen, he must have been well aware that he is following a strong tradition. This conviction would inevitably lead him to his position regarding the possibility of remission for heinous sins, and we have seen that he firmly believes that they are remissible.

Ambrose's treatment of I Cor. 5 is particularly noteworthy for his remarks concerning the part which the congregation plays in the restoration of the offender. It is clear that he thinks of the passage in the light of penitential practice in the Church of his day, although he does not describe how the punishment is to be imposed on offenders. However, he believes that the congregation may not only help the offender back into the fellowship of the Church, but that the faithful members may experience a further cleansing from their own sins by their support of an excommunicated penitent.

Ambrose's tone is strongly reminiscent of that of Pacian; both believe in the absolute availability of forgiveness, even for gross sins, but they do not water down the need for a serious penance in such cases. Such passages as the ones above, taken in isolation, might lead some to think that the Milanese bishop, with his strong emphasis on mercy, is weak on stressing the penitential discipline; however, the famous incident of his enforcing of penance on Theodosius after the mass slaughter at Thessalonica shows that Ambrose is far from soft at this point. In chapter 11 of his *Epistle 11* (51, Maurist numbering), Ambrose says, *Peccatum non tollitur nisi lacrimis et poenitentia*.²⁶ Odoardi has summed up the bishop's thinking: "Per Ambrogio la penitenza é necessaria assolutamente, per necessità di mezzo, essendo

²⁵*Ibid.* (Section 64), p. 189.

²⁶*CSEL LXXXII*, p. 216.

l'unico, il solo mezzo con cui l'uomo—dopo il Battesimo—può liberarsi del peccato."²⁷ Von Campenhausen has remarked:

Yet dominating everything is the intention to exhibit the religious meaning of the penitential order as such, and to make the inescapability of the divine commandment theologically plain. With deep earnestness the rigour of the "law" and the consolation of the "gospel" are brought into their correct relationship. God is merciful and does not give up even the sinner; but He forgives his sins only when he really regrets them, and is willing to bear the consequences...Nothing can be changed in the divine order.²⁸

Exegetically, Ambrose remains fairly close to what he sees as the meaning of the text; his multiple-level view of Scripture is most clearly seen, however, in his interpretation of I Cor. 5:7a, in which Paul exhorts the Corinthians to cleanse out the old leaven. Ambrose views it both congregationally and personally; the offender is to be expelled, but the faithful as well are to make use of the situation to personally purge themselves of any remaining old leaven.

Ambrose's other references to the Corinthian text are scattered throughout his writings and are of varying importance.

A. In *Epistle XXXVII* (47 in Maurist numbering), chapter 6, Ambrose writes to Sabinus:

Quid autem maiorum nostrorum exempla proferam, qui epistulis suis fidem infuderunt populorum mentibus atque integros et confertos scripserunt codiculos et praesentes se esse, cum absentes scriberent, significarunt, dicente sancto apostolo quia *absens* erat *corpore, sed praesens spiritu*, non solum cum scriberet, sed etiam cum iudicaret? Denique absens per epistulam condemnabat et idem absolvebat per epistulam.

²⁷Odoardi, *La Dottrina della Penitenza in S. Ambrogio*, p. 16.

²⁸von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Latin Church*, p. 119.

Epistula enim Pauli quaedam effigies erat eius
praesentiae et forma operis.²⁹

Ambrose's reference to Paul's both condemning and absolving almost certainly ties in with his belief that the offender of I Cor. 5 found pardon and restoration, as shown by Paul's words in II Cor. 2, which Ambrose construes as concerning the same man. We note the bishop's firm belief in the power employed by the Apostle; in this passage, it is Paul's letter which seems to have the power concentrated in it but he does not assert that the same power is fully present in the Church of his day, nor does he deny it³⁰; in this letter, he is concerned to show that epistles have the power to do God's work, and he cites I Cor. 5:3 as an illustration of this.

B. In *De Spiritu Sancto* II, 8, 76³¹, Ambrose is refuting those who attempt to use linguistic arguments to prove a subordinationist view of the Holy Spirit. He cites I Cor. 5:4 (*Conventibus vobis et meo spiritu cum virtute domini Iesu*) as showing that there is no condescension on the part of Jesus when he comes into the same gathering with the Spirit; therefore, they are equal. What is interesting here is that Ambrose interprets *meo spiritu* as referring to the Holy Spirit, who in some way has become identified with the Apostle's spirit. He adds no further commentary here.

C. An important reference to I Cor. 5:5 occurs in *Epistle XVIII* (70, Maurist), which is addressed to the priest Orantianus. Ambrose is doing a spiritual exegesis of the book of Micah, and in chapter 21, after identifying the Soul as the speaker in these passages, he says:

Considerans etiam insultare sibi aliquam potestatem,
quae resistebat sibi, ne meliorem sequeretur viam, et
inequitate quod tradita esset **in interitum carnis**, ut
diversis adtereretur malis, quae vel a domino propter
peccatorum solutionem decernerentur vel ab iniquo
propter invidiam conversionis, ut ad se revocaret

²⁹CSEL LXXXII, p. 22.

³⁰Cf. Appendix A (the Seventh Council of Carthage) and the passage concerning Dionysius of Alexandria in "The Later Egyptians", above.

³¹CSEL LXXIX, p. 117.

adflitam, dicit adhuc: **Iram domini sustinebo**, qui vel lapsam castigat vel tibi potestatem adfligendi dedit, **quia peccavi; sustinebo tamen, donec iustificet causam meam**. Nisi enim confessa fuero et exsolvero praetia iniquitatum mearum, non potero iustificari. Cum autem fuero iustificata solvens **duplicia peccata, educet iudicium meum** deponens indignationem, quia satisfactum sententiae est, **educet me ad lumen, ut videam iustitiam eius** et aspiciam delectationem eius. **Videbit** hoc lumen reconciliationis meae **inimica mea**, id est diaboli nequitia, **et operietur confusione quae nunc dicit: Ubi est deus tuus?**³²

This passage reveals several facets of Ambrose's style and interests. We note his debt to the Alexandrians in his allegorical approach to the prophecy of Micah. Homes Dudden has asserted:

Ambrose preferred to preach on the Old Testament..partly because the available commentaries on the Old Testament seemed to him better than those on the New; partly because the Old Testament was more in need of popular interpretation; and partly because these ancient Scriptures afforded ampler opportunities for the exercise of the art of allegorical exegesis. In his expositions of Scriptural passages he was seldom content with the literal meaning, even when this meaning was most clear and elevated; he could not rest until he had discovered beneath the letter a deeper sense (*altior sensus*).³³

In Ambrose's treatment of Micah cited above, we can see the truth of Homes Dudden's observations. Micah's clear, magnificent prophecy of the restoration of Israel becomes for Ambrose a description of the soul's restoration to divine grace after a fall.

Several important items can be seen in this citation. First, Ambrose's statement that the *interitum carnis* may be *propter peccatorum solutionem decernerentur* should be noted. *Solutio* can mean either "loosing" or "payment". The context here favours the latter interpretation. Although Ambrose does not use the

³²CSEL LXXXII, pp. 138-9.

³³Homes Dudden, *The Life and Times of St. Ambrose*, II, p. 457.

term *satisfactio*, the idea is definitely present, if only in embryonic form; the cognate verb shows up near the end of the citation above (*deponens indignationem, quia satisfactum sententiae est...*). Even more important, just before these words is the passage, *Nisi enim confessa fuero et exsolvero praetia iniquitatum mearum, non potero iustificari*, which is related to the same concept. Second, we note Ambrose's caution in not ascribing all evil either to God or to the devil; he mentions the possibility of the soul's incurring evil because of the envy of Satan, but he also states that evils may be decreed by the Lord as a *solutio* for sin. In either case, he sees the punishment as remedial, intended to draw the soul close to God. If the evils which the soul is enduring are inflicted by Satan, he will be frustrated, since God will use the harassment of the evil one to purify the soul. Here Ambrose is once more reminiscent of Chrysostom, who does not tire of describing the devil's usefulness in the plan of God, to the ultimate frustration of evil.

D. A reference to I Cor. 5:5 occurs in Ambrose's *Enarratio in Ps. 38* (LXX). In his treatment of v. 10 (*Obmutui et non aperui os meum; quoniam tu fecisti me*), Ambrose notes:

hoc est, dedisti me tu opprobrium insipienti, ideo obmutui, et non aperui os meum, ne peccata majora contraherem. Agnovi voluntatem tuam, ut ad tempus erubescerem, et postea salvus fierem veniam postulando. Prodest ergo interdum et opprobrium. Siquidem etiam ipse prodest carnis interitus, ut testificatur Apostolus dicens: **Tradidi eum in interitum carnis; ut spiritus salvus sit in die Domini nostri Jesu Christi.**³⁴

Once again, Ambrose states his belief that the punishment is remedial.

E. In Ambrose's *Expositio Psalmi CXVIII*, Part XVI, there is a reference to vv. 4-5. Ambrose says that the sixteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, Ain, signifies "the eye", which leads him into discussing the importance of motives. In chapter 13,

³⁴PL XIV, 1103-4.

treating Ps. 118:121 (LXX), which reads *feci iudicium et iustitiam*, Ambrose contrasts this attitude with those which are substandard. The one who commits adultery has his portion with the devil, but the modest, continent, and merciful one has his portion with Christ, who does not punish his servants unless they have fallen into vice. Even then, it does not mean that Christ has deserted the sinner. Ambrose cites Ps. 118:121 (LXX) again, then says:

non ut adroget, sed excuset, ne quasi peccator deseratur a Christo. exemplo sit nobis apostolica lectio, quam ob rem unusquisque tradatur. illum enim qui **uxorem patris** habuit, quia sic operatus est, **tradidit satanae**, ut dicit, apostolus. non ergo esset traditus, nisi diaboli opera fecisset.³⁵

Thus, Ambrose thinks that some of the difficulties of life are due to sin, but the difficulty does not mean that the sinner is severed from relationship with Christ; rather, it means that this is the punishment which Christ gives to his own. Although he does not say so here, it has already become obvious that Ambrose views such punishment as remedial.

Earlier in Ambrose's exposition of this Psalm, there is a reference to I Cor. 5:5. It occurs in his treatment of the ninth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, Teth, which Ambrose says signifies exclusion. In chapter 4, in which the Psalmist says that God is good, Ambrose puts this in the context of exclusion. He declares:

Est et alius qui excludatur in bono, ut ille qui apostolica auctoritate sublatus e medio plebis est, quia **malum opus fecit, traditus in carnis interitum**, ut eius spiritus saluaretur. ex quo intellegimus, quia in bono excluditur qui iubetur agere paenitentiam, ut humilietur et conpungatur corde; haec enim reconciliationis solent esse suffragia.³⁶

³⁵*CSEL* LXII, p. 359.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 191.

The punishment was for a good end, i.e., it was remedial. Ambrose, though brief, is very clear that he understands reconciliation to follow the punishment, which he interprets within the parameters of the penitential system of his day. The emphasis on reconciliation occurs again shortly afterwards, in his treatment of Ps. 118:92 (LXX), *nisi lex tua meditatio mea sit, tunc forsitan perissem in humilitate mea*. Ambrose says that this humiliation has arisen from guilt. He then adds:

et quia culpa praecessit, ideo humiliatum ostendit, hoc est adtritum temptationibus et aduersis et traditum anxietatibus, quemadmodum et ille, qui traditus est a Paulo in interitum carnis, humiliatus utique est, ut postea posset reconciliationem mereri.³⁷

The end of humiliation proceeding from guilt is reconciliation; Ambrose never departs from this. The treatment of this particular psalm is highly interesting from the point of view of Ambrose's exegetical approach. Homes Dudden has described it as follows:

Allegorically interpreted every sentence of the Scriptures is rich in religious and moral instruction. Not a word is superfluous or devoid of force. Profound meanings are attached even to the most minute and apparently trivial details. Numbers are regarded as symbolical. Names also are held to be peculiarly significant, and not unfrequently [*sic*] are made the starting-points of elaborate trains of allegorizing.³⁸

In addition to these references, there is one further allusion to I Cor. 5:6-7 (in reverse order) in Ambrose's *Expositio*, Part 13, chapter 6. *En passant*, he mentions that the Jew does not know what leaven truly signifies; the one who really understands will know that to purge out the old leaven means to purge out the old man with his acts, so that there will be a new dough.³⁹ Here we see Ambrose interpreting Paul's

³⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 196-7.

³⁸Homes Dudden, *op. cit.*, pp. 458-9.

³⁹*CSEL* LXII, p. 285.

injunction in a personalised, spiritual manner; each Christian is to cleanse himself or herself of the old leaven. There is no reference to the original congregational context of the verses.

F. Ambrose has several typological references to I Cor. 5:7b. In his treatment of Ps. XLIII (LXX), his text reads, *Dedisti nos tanquam oves escarum*. He says that now Jesus has become our sheep for feasting, since *Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus*.⁴⁰ I Cor. 5 is cited twice in Ambrose's commentary on Luke. One brief reference occurs in his treatment of 1:13-4. Referring to Gabriel's appearance to Zacharias while the latter was performing the offering, Ambrose says that none should doubt that angels assist when Christ is offered; *etenim pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus*.⁴¹ Although he adds no further comments, it is probable that Ambrose is thinking of the Eucharist. Also, in his treatment of Lk. 13:21 (the woman who hid leaven in the flour), he adopts a spiritualising interpretation of the leaven, saying that it stands for the leaven of the Holy Spirit working in the heart of the regenerate man; he cites I Cor. 5:8 here.⁴² These passages are obviously removed from their original disciplinary context and do not teach us anything else concerning Ambrose's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5.

In *Epistle XIII* (23, Maurist), of dubious authenticity, the author cites I Cor. 5:7b, contrasting Christian practice with Jewish scruples (the letter concerns the date of Easter).⁴³

G. There is one reference to I Cor. 5 in the epistles of Ambrose which, while not typological, is made only in passing. In *Epistle XIV* (63, Maurist), addressed to the church at Vercelli, Ambrose is attacking the attitude that fasting, frugality, and virginity are useless. Directing his words against what he perceives to be a rising

⁴⁰*PL* XIV, 1160-1.

⁴¹*CSEL* XXXII, p. 28.

⁴²*Ibid.*, pp. 367-8.

⁴³*CSEL* LXXXII, p. 231.

antinomianism, he cites I Cor. 5:9-11 to support his stance, which calls for separation from the world.⁴⁴

In these citations from Ambrose's works, his pastoral concern comes across strongly. He is concerned that the Church live up to its calling. Leslie W. Barnard has rightly stated that Ambrose's "exegetical writings are important in that they grew out of his pastoral work...".⁴⁵ Von Campenhausen has also noticed this, remarking:

To Ambrose, the most essential task of a bishop was at all times Biblical instruction and preaching. However many duties his office imposed upon him in the course of years, duties of administration and pastoral care, the education of his clergy, and ecclesiastical and civil politics, Ambrose never neglected or failed in his obligations as a preacher. In this, above all, he saw the meaning of his spiritual calling.⁴⁶

It is perhaps this which gives Ambrose's writings a strongly practical flavour, even when he is resorting to speculation. He is aware that he is preaching to real people who live in a real world, and he knows that there must be a practical application of his deductions if they are to be of any use. In his *Epistle XVIII* (cf. above, under letter C), his hesitancy to ascribe all ill either to divine punishment or to the devil perhaps reveals his awareness of the complexity of real life; he refuses to make a blanket statement. Yet, whatever the source of troubles, Ambrose is concerned to show the Christian soul how to take a constructive and fruitful attitude toward them. Gérard Nauroy has remarked:

S'il n'y a rien de systématique dans l'exégèse d'Ambroise, qui n'adhère pas aux genres exégetiques distingués par Origène ou Jérôme, c'est que, pour lui, le commentaire d'Écriture est une forme souple, qui doit

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁴⁵Barnard, "To Allegorize or Not to Allegorize", p. 6.

⁴⁶von Campenhausen, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

s'adapter à toutes les situations pastorales comme à tous les événements de la vie religieuse.⁴⁷

He adds:

Ambroise ne brigue ni l'érudition du scoliaste, de l'auteur savant de *quaestiones et responsiones*, ni la science exhaustive et encyclopédique des grands commentaires scélés sur eux-mêmes. L'exégèse n'est pas pour lui un genre particulier, elle est la substance de tous les genres littéraires pratiqués par un pasteur chrétien. Non seulement l'Écriture est son propre commentaire...mais encore elle est adaptée à toutes les situations de la vie, à tous les discours requis d'un évêque...L'exégèse est bien pour Ambroise un mode de pensée fondamental, plus qu'une méthode ou un genre; partout requise, partout présente, on ne saurait l'enfermer dans une catégorie littéraire particulière.⁴⁸

Ambrose's love of the inner and spiritual sense of Scripture often leads him to place I Cor. 5:7 (*Expurgate...*) in a personal context, as opposed to its original congregational setting; all Christians are to make sure that they rid themselves of the leaven of the old man. However, he does not spiritualise I Cor. 5:3-5 at all; to him, it is part of the penitential procedure of the Church of his day, and it is necessary for the forgiveness of post-baptismal sin. As has been seen, his confidence that the person to whom Paul refers in II Cor. 2:5-11 is the same man as the one who had offended so grievously in I Cor. 5 never wavers. As a consequence, there is forgiveness available for even the most serious sins, although Ambrose holds to the tradition that such a major penance can be done only once.⁴⁹ Allan Fitzgerald has noted that, according to Ambrose, "The penitential process was meant to bring about a change so radical that the penitent would not have to begin again..."⁵⁰ The Novatianist stance is completely wrong. Ambrose is unique in his tying together a combined congregational and

⁴⁷Nauroy, "L'Écriture dans la pastorale d'Ambroise de Milan", p. 377.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 378.

⁴⁹e.g., *De paenitentia* II, 95; *CSEL LXXIII*, pp. 200ff.

⁵⁰Fitzgerald, *Conversion through Penance in the Italian Church of the Fourth and Fifth Centuries*, p. 228.

spiritualising reference to I Cor. 5:7 in the light of the excommunication of the offender; this is most clearly seen in Book I, chapter 15, of *De paenitentia*: as the penitent beseeches them for their spiritual help in returning to grace, the faithful are to use this occasion for ridding themselves yet further of the leaven of the old human nature within the. *Donavit enim Christus ecclesiae suae, ut unum per omnes redimeret, quae domini Iesu meruit adventu, ut per unum omnes redimerentur*.⁵¹ Thus, the penance of the excommunicated is not only restorative for them, but it is helpful for those who have not fallen under the ban. Ambrose's extremely high view of the value of penance could hardly be more boldly stated.

III. AMBROSIASTER

The entirety of Ambrosiaster's comments on I Cor. 5 is to be found in his commentary on that chapter and will be treated under that heading. Afterwards, I will examine his remarks on II Cor. 2:5-11, Col. 2:5 (which uses the "absent in body, but present in spirit" terminology), and I Tim. 1:20, which refers to Hymenaeus and Alexander being surrendered to Satan so that they may learn not to blaspheme.

A. VERSES 1-2

G.T.D. Angel has noted Ambrosiaster's relating of Pauline teaching to contemporary legal institutions⁵², and Maria Grazia Mara observes that we need to understand better "how much influence a certain juridic mentality exercised on Ambrosiaster's thought and his interpretation of the faith...".⁵³ The truth of these statements is abundantly borne out in the verses under consideration. Ambrosiaster remarks first that Paul refers to such a fornication as does not exist among the Gentiles (*qualis nec inter gentes {est}*) in order to show by what penalty (*poena*) the offender must be punished (*multandus esset*) who has committed such a dreadful sin

⁵¹CSEL LXXIII, pp. 156-7.

⁵²Angel, "Ambrosiaster", *NIDCC*, p. 32.

⁵³Mara, "Ambrosiaster", *Patrology* IV, p. 181.

under the eternal and divine justice.⁵⁴ Already we see references to penalty, punishment, and justice. He then says that the man's sin was not his alone; it involved those who stood by him. His sin is thus seen to be even worse. Ambrosiaster states that Paul, rather than operating by complaints, prefers to make supplications to the Corinthians, asking them to expel the offender. He continues:

ut omnes uno consilio abicerent eum, si negaret emendare se. si autem quis potestatem non habet, quem scit reum, abicere aut probare non valet, immunis est; et iudicis non est sine accusatore damnare, quia et dominus Iudam, cum fur esset, quia non est accusatus, minime abiecit.⁵⁵

This passage is unique among the writers examined in this thesis; the interest in legalities strikes the observer forcefully. The discussion of when (and when not) to judge is highly individual, revealing the accuracy of Angel's statement, cited above. Jesus did not expel Judas, since the latter was not accused, even though he was a thief; but in the next words of his commentary, he says that this was not the case in Corinth. Everyone in the congregation knew of the man's sin, and therefore *neque testibus opus erat neque tergiversatione aliqua poterat tegi crimen*.⁵⁶ Ambrosiaster's unequivocal use of the word *novercam* to describe the relationship between the offender and the woman is reminiscent of the Greek μητρυνία which we have noted in writers from Origen onwards. Ambrosiaster also describes the woman as the *uxorem patris*, which would imply a stable relationship with the offender's father. This has not been a casual relationship; it may even have been a marriage.⁵⁷ Although Ambrosiaster does not develop his thought here, his words *si negaret emendare se* should be noted; even in the offender's lamentable situation, the door for repentance is still open.

⁵⁴CSEL LXXXI, p. 52.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 53.

⁵⁷Lewis and Short do not say whether the term ever applies to a concubine.

B. VERSES 3-5

Ambrosiaster makes almost no comment on v. 3 *in loc.*, merely noting that Paul signifies by his words that he will be present *auctoritate spiritus, qui nusquam abest* (he touches briefly on v. 3 in the context of v. 5; cf. below). Likewise, although he cites v. 4, his comments are almost entirely on v. 5. I will divide them into two parts:

quoniam omnis carnalis voluptas a diabolo est, ac per hoc, cum huic voluptati remittitur, traditur satanae. caro enim hoc habet in natura, ut intereat. anima enim (ergo) cum se iungit desiderio eius, infirmans spiritalem suum vigorem simul interitum patitur. itaque si hic correptus stupri admissi erubesceret eiectum se, non interiret paenitentia subsequente. nam omnium consensu et praesentia, sed et virtute domini Iesu, id est sententia, cuius legatione fungebatur apostolus, abiciendum illum de ecclesia. cum eicitur, traditur **satanae in interitum carnis**. et anima enim et corpus intereunt, quando quae contra legem sunt fiunt. sed in hac aliter causa interitus carnis homini deputatur. quamquam enim omnia peccata carnalem hominem praestent, hoc tamen specialiter desiderium carnis est, quod sordibus maculatam animam cum corpore tradit gehennae, quia victa anima {a} libidine carnis fit caro, sicut et corpus recte gubernatum spiritale appellatur. animus tamen est, qui aut victus inlecebris totum hominem carneum facit, aut in vigore naturae suae manens carni praestat, ut spiritalis dicatur.⁵⁸

Perhaps the first thing to strike the observer's notice is Ambrosiaster's statement that all carnal pleasure is from the devil. Although he does not develop his thinking here, it is possible that this statement points to the emerging regard for celibacy and monasticism in the West. We know of Jerome's enthusiastic advocacy of them, and it is a good guess that he and Ambrosiaster were contemporaries in

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 53-4.

Rome;⁵⁹ it is thus a possibility that Ambrosiaster's words mildly reflect some of the growing Western enthusiasm for asceticism.

The next item for scrutiny is Ambrosiaster's anthropology. His treatment of *spiritus* will be included under the next citation; what is important here is his idea of the soul. When sin appears in a person's life, the soul is weakened in its spiritual vigour and begins to perish. Penance is to halt this process of the death of the soul; this is his first statement concerning the *interitum carnis*. His other way of interpreting it is equally startling: although all sins reveal a man to be carnal, sexual sin is particularly so, dragging the soul down so that it becomes flesh (*fit caro*); by the same token, the body, rightly governed, can be called spiritual. The soul is the determining factor. Although Ambrosiaster says nothing about the human spirit, the final lines of the citation above seem to indicate that he thinks of soul and spirit as the same in the human composition, or at least, closely related⁶⁰.

Ambrosiaster's brief remark, *nam omnium consensu et praesentia, sed et virtute domini Iesu, id est sententia, cuius legatione fungebatur apostolus*, should be noted: he understands (and is interested in) how a legate works. This reveals his awareness of governmental processes in his time; it points to the administrative way of thinking that has already been shown to characterise him. His passing remark concerning the perishing of soul and body when they are *contra legem* should also be observed.

The next portion of Ambrosiaster's comments on I Cor. 5:5 are as follows:

tradi contaminatum supradictum **satanae, ut spiritus**
sanctus saluus sit in hominibus ecclesiae **in die** iudicii.
 nisi enim eiectus esset, non fieret saluus spiritus
 ecclesiae in die iudicii. deserebat enim omnes
 contaminationis causa, ut in die domini nudi ab spiritu

⁵⁹Mara, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

⁶⁰Given Ambrosiaster's differentiation of *anima/animus* and *spiritus*, I have treated the former as synonyms.

sancto inventi audirent a iudice domino: **recedite a me, non novi vos**, sicut dicit ad Romanos: **si quis autem spiritum Christi non habet, hic non est eius**, et in alia (alia in) epistola: **nolite contristare spiritum sanctum dei**. si enim contristatur, deserit, et non est (erit) salvus, non utique sibi, qui impassibilis est, sed nobis quibus datus est, ut per illum dei filii esse probemur. res enim quae amittitur salva non est, non utique sibi, quae ubicumque sit necesse est sit, sed ei a quo amittitur.⁶¹

Here *spiritus* definitely refers to the Holy Spirit (*ut spiritus sanctus salvus sit*).⁶² Since others in the congregation are involved in the guilt of the offender (cf. comments on vv. 1-2, above), they must act quickly in order to retain their share in the Holy Spirit, who will desert those who grieve him. Ambrosiaster is at pains to show that this in no way implies that the Spirit is changeable in himself, but that there is a sense in which the disobedient Church may lose him⁶³, and stand before the Judge denuded of the Spirit, who proves that we are the children of God.

Ambrosiaster's understanding of *spiritus* here has similarities to other writers already examined: Tertullian, in *De pudicitia*, thinks that *spiritus* must refer to the spirit of the Church (which he does not equate with the Holy Spirit), since his Montanist stance precludes any idea of the offender's spirit being saved.⁶⁴ The School of Antioch (in particular, Severian of Gabala, although the other writers in that School agree with him⁶⁵) thinks that πνεῦμα may refer to the Holy Spirit, as does Ambrosiaster, but that it also refers to the *grace* of the Spirit; they also hold to the theory that only a redeemed man or woman can be said to have a spirit; otherwise, they are merely ψυχικοί. Ambrosiaster takes a slightly different tack, relating the

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁶²Migne omits "sanctus"; its recovery by CSEL makes the exegesis far more lucid.

⁶³*Ecclesiae* in the opening lines of the citation is interpreted as dative, not genitive.

⁶⁴At least, through the ecclesiastical system; Tertullian leaves open the possibility that God conceivably *may* forgive, although the Church is not granted that permission (*De pudicitia* 3,5).

⁶⁵cf. Wiles, *The Divine Apostle*, p. 36.

soul and the spirit in his anthropology, saying that it is the soul which determines whether one is carnal or spiritual. *Spiritus* is definitely the Holy Spirit in this context, and sinners must be expelled (and consequently, deprived of the Spirit) if the Church is to retain the Holy Spirit in its midst. As will be seen, Ambrosiaster believes in the remedial power of penance, so the deprivation of the offender in regard to the Holy Spirit is not final.

C. THE REMAINDER OF I CORINTHIANS 5

After Ambrosiaster's remark about the necessity for the expulsion of the sinner so that the Spirit may be retained for the Church, it is not surprising to find that his comments on I Cor. 5:6 interpret that verse in a congregational context, i.e., the dough which must be purged is the *congregational* dough. He makes no reference to a personal, individual cleansing here. He emphasises again that all who ignore sin when they should be reproofing it are guilty.⁶⁶

In I Cor. 5:7, Ambrosiaster interprets the leaven in two ways: first, as teaching, in the light of the Dominical saying, *cavete a fermento farisaeorum* (Matt. 16:6). It is bad teaching for sinners to be allowed to remain, unrebuked, in the Christian congregation, as was the case in Corinth. Second, leaven represents the old way of life. Ambrosiaster compares Israel on its exodus; they had left the old pagan errors behind in Egypt and were being led into a new life. It is thus with Christians. By the death of Christ, we are set free from old ways and are to be led into new lives. This, says Ambrosiaster, is what it means to be *azymos*.⁶⁷

In I Cor. 5:8, he steers a middle course. He realises that a congregation consists of individuals, and that each of us must make sure that we are free from the

⁶⁶CSEL LXXXII, p. 55.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 55-6.

old leaven of sin, but he is also aware that the main emphasis of this verse is corporate, and his comments reveal this.⁶⁸

He has almost no comments to add to Paul's commands in vv. 9 and 11, but in v. 10 (*alioquin debueratis de hoc mundo exisse (exire)*), he thinks that Paul is saying that it would be better to die than to be mixed together with Christians who have fallen into heinous sin.⁶⁹

In 5:13, Ambrosiaster notes that previously Paul has told the Corinthians not to judge before the appointed time (I Cor. 4:5), whereas here the congregation is told to pass judgment. Ambrosiaster asserts that the first injunction was given in the case of unproven suspicions, and particularly in respect to teachers; it is for God alone to judge secret things. Here, the situation is different; the sin is well known. Paul's advice here is in keeping with what he says in II Cor. 13:5 (*vos ipsos temptate, si estis in fide; ipsi vos probate*), and expulsion of the offender is necessary, so that a distinction may be made between good and evil, *et operis et hominibus*.⁷⁰

Thus, these verses (aside from his unusual interpretation of 5:10) add little more to our understanding of Ambrosiaster's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5. He clearly believes in the excommunication of the offender, and his brief citations of vv. 9 and 11 show that he affirms the Pauline injunctions on shunning flagrant and impenitent offenders.

His approach to the text is straightforward and is altogether devoid of allegory. He interprets Scripture by Scripture (cf. above the references to Saul, Samuel, and Eli). Mara has called attention to his "careful exegesis which omits nothing of the Pauline text";⁷¹ this is certainly observable in his treatment of I Cor. 5. Alexander Souter remarks, "...the work is intended for Christians, and indeed for orthodox

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 56-7.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 57-8.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 58-9.

⁷¹Mara, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

Christians. The current heretical errors are from time to time pointed out and stigmatised."⁷² It should be noted that in his treatment of I Cor. 5:5, Ambrosiaster makes it clear that he is not questioning the ubiquity of the Holy Spirit; he is writing at a time when full-fledged Trinitarian doctrine is still coming into definition, and he desires to make his stance clear.

Maria Mara observes, "There is also a question as to whether Ambrosiaster was Greek or Latin by birth, and thus whether the linguistic difficulties present in his writings are to be attributed to the non-Latin origin of the author or merely to his stated aversion to the Greek manuscripts and his adherence to the Latin translations."⁷³ This problem is demonstrated in his treatment of I Cor. 5. On the one hand, his treatment of *spiritus* has similarities to that of Tertullian; on the other, it is reminiscent of the School of Antioch. Also, his idea that the sinning soul becomes flesh (*fit caro*) is the same as that of his near contemporary, Epiphanius of Salamis (cf. Appendix B), who, after quoting Paul's words stating that the man who joins himself to a harlot is one flesh with her (I Cor. 6:16-7), states:

Therefore, he who commits sexual impurity (πορνεία) has become flesh—not only the flesh itself, but all the rest; the soul and all the other things have become flesh. For he who has been joined to a harlot has become flesh, and being fleshly, he is called flesh. But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit, that is, body and soul and every other thing that is in man, is one spirit with the Lord.⁷⁴

This is precisely what Ambrosiaster is saying, although there is no known connection between the two men.

⁷²Souter, "A Study of Ambrosiaster", pp. 6-7.

⁷³Mara, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

⁷⁴*Panarion* LXVI, 85; *PG* XLII, 167-8; the translation is mine.

Ambrosiaster does not say what kind of punishment he envisions when such an occasion arises. He says that the soul will begin to perish, but he indulges in no speculation as to what that may entail.

D. II CORINTHIANS 2

In his comments on II Cor. 2:7, Ambrosiaster identifies the penitent man mentioned here with the offender of I Cor. 5:

adflicto homini peccati proprii causa subvenire praecipit, quia paenitentia, si de vero animo est, hoc est si correptus statim in animo doleat, protinus habet fructum. denique in Regnorum habetur, quia Achab, cum arguisset eum profeta, conmotus animo statim meruit veniam (I Kings 21:27-9). et David in causa Uriae Cethei correptus, quia cognovit peccasse se, delictum eius deletum est (II Sam. 12:13). ita et apostolus illum, qui incestum commiserat habens uxorem patris, obiurgatum et abiectum dolentem revocari iubet, ne diu videns se contristatum sperni desperans de se daret animum ad mundum fruendum, quasi qui locum apud deum iam non haberet. hoc est maiore tristitia absorberi desperantem de se converti ad admittenda peccata, quibus gravatus absorbeatur a secunda morte. haec enim vera paenitentia est iam cessare a peccato. sic enim probat dolere se sibi, si de cetero desinat.⁷⁵

Ambrosiaster's stance is clear; the punishment is to bring the offender back into line. Once it has accomplished this purpose, restoration should follow. His idea that the man, if not restored, may be driven to despair and throw himself more deeply into a life of sin, is a highly interesting interpretation. His identification of the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2 is absolutely certain.

In his comments on II Cor. 2:10⁷⁶, two points are worthy of consideration in this context. First, Ambrosiaster says that Paul *ideo obsecratur, ut dimittant illi, significans deum illi ignovisse, quia nihil sine dei spiritu agebat apostolus*. The

⁷⁵CSEL, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-7.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 207-8.

forgiveness of God is available in this life, even for serious offences. The other point occurs when Ambrosiaster says that Paul exercised the functions of Christ's legate (*cuius legatione fungebatur*) when he forgave the offender *in persona Christi*. We have already noted the writer's use of the same language in his comments on I Cor. 5:5 (cf. above). This usage highlights once more the interest which Ambrosiaster takes in legal/governmental matters, and which provide him with a distinctive category for interpreting Scripture.

E. COLOSSIANS 2:5

I mentioned earlier that Ambrosiaster says almost nothing in his comments on I Cor. 5:3, in which Paul describes himself as *absens corpore, praesens autem spiritu*. However, in his remarks on Col. 2:5, which uses similar terminology, Ambrosiaster says:

unde apostolus spiritu se illic adesse dicit, ut reverentiam eius ante oculos habentes abstinerent se ab huiusmodi hominibus. si enim spiritus Helisaei profetae vidit fraudem Giezi euntis ad Neman Syrum, ut acciperet sub nomine eius quae illi mandata non fuerant et descendentem prompto animo Neman ei plus dedisse quam fuerat postulatus, quanto magis apostolus ea quae dixit poterat in spiritu videre! maior enim gratia fuit in apostolis quam in profetis.⁷⁷

Here Ambrosiaster refers to the story of Elisha and Gehazi (II Kings 5:20-7) to illustrate what Paul meant when he said that he was absent in body, but present in spirit. The citation of this episode is familiar from the writings of the Greek fathers, especially Origen (*Catena* on I Corinthians 5) and John Chrysostom (*Homily XV* on I Corinthians *et al.*). This once again raises the question of whether Ambrosiaster has any acquaintance with the Greek writers; on the other hand, the story of Elisha and Gehazi may be a natural one for interpreting Paul's enigmatic language.

⁷⁷CSEL LXXXI, p. 180.

F. I TIMOTHY 1:20

Ambrosiaster's comments on this verse, which uses the *tradere Satanae* terminology, are as follows:

nam qui fidem spernit, procul dubio malae est conscientiae. aut enim hypocrita praedicator [est] aut apertus blasphemus, sicut erant Hymeneus et Alexander, qui deserentes fidem naufragi facti sunt, id est nudi veritate aut privati vita. quid est enim veritas nisi vita? quos tradidisse se dicit satanae, ut emendarentur causa blasphemiae. traditio autem haec est, quia conmotus apostolus blasfemiis eorum sententiam protulit in eos, diabolus autem qui ad hoc paratus est, ut aversos a deo accipiat in potestatem, audita sententia corripuit (corripit) eos, ut intellexerent hac causa se poenis adstringi, quia blasphemaverant. hinc est, unde in evangelio dictum est inter cetera: **iam noli peccare, ne quid tibi deterius contingat** [Jn. 5:14], ostendens causa peccati aliquando infirmitates inferri corporibus. et quia ministro diabolo fiunt, declaravit dominus dicens inter multa: **haec autem cum sit filia Abrahae, quam adligaverat satanas decem et octo annis, non oportuit solvi a vinculo die sabbati** [Lk. 13: 16]? ⁷⁸

This passage indicates that Ambrosiaster may view the punishment as involving some sort of physical difficulty, such as the woman in Lk. 13 incurred. He thinks that there are times when bodies are bound with infirmities because of sin. Thus, the Church is to excommunicate offenders, and the devil is to afflict them until they are amended. Ambrosiaster assumes that penance is to be remedial.

In conclusion, Ambrosiaster appears as a writer of strong individuality. His great interest in legal and governmental functions gives his work a distinctive character. However, in his deductions, he agrees with the tradition of the Church, both Greek and Latin, in identifying the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man in II Cor. 2. Consequently, he views penance as remedial in nature. With Chrysostom,

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 258-9.

he sees the nature of the punishment as involving physical problems in addition to the Church's excommunication. With Epiphanius, he views the soul as becoming fleshly when the person falls into sin; penance is to restore it to its proper spiritual function. His similarity both to Tertullian and to the School of Antioch has been noted previously; but he differs from both of these in his treatment of *spiritus*. The spirit is the Holy Spirit, who will not dwell in the presence of unrepented sin; consequently, the Church must act to rid itself of such a situation. The similarities of this writer to other commentators on I Cor. 5:3-5, both Eastern and Western, bring the questions concerning his identity and background into sharp focus. He remains an enigma, and a brilliant one.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

These three writers exhibit a strong unanimity; all of them believe that forgiveness is available even for serious sins, and they base this on the identification of the sinful man in I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2. In doing this, they are following a long tradition dating back to the time of Origen (although Tertullian, even earlier, also mentions the existence of the same train of thought, which he furiously rejects in *De pudicitia*). The unanimity of thought present in the writings of Pacian, Ambrose, and Ambrosiaster is remarkable when one considers the difference in exegetical approach taken by the last-named writer. In my concluding paragraphs on the School of Antioch, I remarked the unanimity in deduction which characterises those writers, not only with each other, but also with the Alexandrians, in relation to the availability of penance (and the identity of the two figures mentioned in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2). Something of the same nature can be said of Ambrosiaster and the agreement of his deductions with those of the other two writers studied in this chapter. Ambrose, it is known, was strongly influenced by Origen, but much of his treatment of I Cor. 5:3-5 does not reflect a direct dependence; rather, he seems to think that his deductions have never been contested in the church of his day, which probably shows

that Ambrose is reflecting what he knows to be the tradition of the Church at this point. His similarities to John Chrysostom have also been noted in the course of our examination. In previous chapters, the evidence that the Greek writers believe in the full availability of forgiveness through penance has been overwhelming. With the Latin writers of the fourth and fifth centuries, the same tradition will be developed. The strong juridical flavour of Ambrosiaster will be seen to stand alone, but the general tenour of his conclusions, firmly in agreement with Church tradition, will merge with the opinions of other writers to be examined in the next chapter.

One interpretation which is conspicuously absent thus far is a monastic application of I Cor. 5:3-5. This will also come to light in the following chapter, showing that in this, as well as in the defining of penitential theology in general, the West was slower than the East, and was in fact strongly influenced by the developments in Eastern thought concerning both penance and monasticism.

APPENDIX C:

PSEUDO-TITUS

The only reference to the Corinthian text which I have discovered in apocryphal literature is in the epistle known as *Pseudo-Titus*. It is a Priscillianist work; since the Spanish priest seems to have flourished c. 370-75, I include this appendix with the late fourth century writers. The work includes a very full reference to the Corinthian text, with the exception of omitting the final clause, *ut spiritus salvus fiat*. The writer, in a rhetorical passage (the following exclamatory passages are preceded by *O*), professes horror that Satan has offered poison to the sinner, instead of honey; yielding to lust for the desire of his father, when he has been described as the bride of Christ [*sponsa Christi*; the necessity of changing genders here involves the writer in difficulty], etc.¹ He then proceeds to include *all* marriage in the condemnation by the Apostle, making an impassioned defence for chastity (i.e., celibacy). He gives no further reference to the Corinthian text.

¹PLS II, 1528.

Chapter 7

LATIN WRITERS OF THE LATE FOURTH AND EARLY FIFTH CENTURIES

This chapter will treat the exegesis of I Corinthians 5:3-5 by the Latin writers whose works appear in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. Jerome and Augustine will occupy the most space, but the works of Pelagius and John Cassian will also be observed. As is my procedure, I will first examine the references to verses 1-2 of the Corinthian text, proceeding from there to verses 3-5, and then to the final portions of the chapter. I will also note the relevant comments on chapter 2 of II Corinthians, Colossians 2:5, and I Timothy 1:20.

I. JEROME

Jerome's references to I Corinthians 5 are numerous, but they are frequently brief. He has left us no commentary on that epistle, and his citations of the text under observation are sprinkled plentifully throughout his other works.

A. VERSES 1-2

A. Jerome's *Epistle CXXII* to Rusticus is concerned with penance. Speaking of the importance of it, he observes:

Samuhel quondam plangebat Saul, quia superbiae
uulnera paenitentiae medicamine non curabat, et Paulus
lugebat Corinthios, qui fornicationis maculas delere
nolebant.¹

Brief as this mention is, it gives clues to his interpretation of the Corinthian passage. The fact that he thinks that Saul *could* have been healed by the medicine of penance indicates that he thinks of the Corinthian situation in the same way. This will be amply proven in further citations. Jerome's placement of penance in a

¹CSEL LVI, p. 57.

medical/medicinal category should also be remarked; this was seen to be characteristic of Ambrose, and it is overwhelmingly so with the Eastern writers studied in this thesis. Later in the same epistle, Jerome cites the Corinthian text again. Referring to Simeon's words to Mary, *Ecce hic positus est in ruinam, et in resurrectionem multorum* (Lk. 2:34), Jerome says:

in ruinam uidelicet peccatorum et in resurrectionem eorum, qui agunt paenitentiam. apostolus scribit ad Corinthios: **auditur inter nos fornicatio et talis fornicatio, qualis nec inter gentes quidem, ita ut uxorem patris aliquis habeat. et uos inflati estis et non magis luctum habuistis, ut tollatur de medio uestrum, qui hoc opus fecit.** et in secunda ad eosdem epistula, **ne abundantiori tristitia pereat, qui eius modi est,** reuocat eum et obsecrat, ut confirment super illum caritatem et, qui incestu perierat, paenitentia conseruetur.²

This passage is particularly important, since it reveals Jerome's belief in the identity of the sinner of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2; it also reiterates his assertion that penance is remedial.

B. Jerome's other references to I Cor. 5:1-2 can be summed up briefly:

1) In his commentary on Amos 2:6ff., he notes the similarity between the prophet's words (*et filius et pater eius introierunt ad puellam, ut polluerent nomen sanctum meum...*) and the situation in Corinth; he has a full citation of vv. 1-2 here.³ Cyril of Alexandria (cf. above) also has noted this similarity of content in his commentary on Amos. 2) Twice in his commentary on Galatians, Jerome refers to I Cor. 5:1-2. His observations on Gal. 3:15-18, treating Paul's words, *Fratres, secundum hominem dico*, compares the condition of the Galatians to that of the Corinthians when Paul was unable to feed them with meat, but rather with milk. Their toleration of *fornicatio, et talis fornicatio quae ne inter gentes*, shows that they

²*Ibid.*, pp. 67-8.

³*CCL LXXVI*, p. 233.

were not ready for solid food.⁴ In his treatment of Galatians 4:1-5, he says that the word *redemption* really applies only to those who had wandered from the truth; for the Gentiles, who had never had the truth, *purchase* is nearer to the mark. He notes that the Corinthians, *in quibus audiebatur fornicatio, et talis fornicatio quae ne inter gentes* were, according to Paul, bought with a price (*Pretio empti esti*; I Cor. 7:23 *et al.*)⁵

3) In a passage which cites II Cor. 2:7 and 10, Jerome describes the sin which Paul has forgiven as *incestum*; given his belief in the identity of the two figures in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2, it is safe to say that I Cor. 5 is in his mind at this point, and we see once more his belief that even serious sins can be forgiven.⁶

4) In a passage which will be treated later in this chapter, Jerome refers to the offender in I Cor. 5 as *illum violatorem novercae*;⁷ the use of this last word ("stepmother") perhaps implies something more than concubinage. We have noted Ambrose's use of this word in his treatment of the Corinthian passage (cf. above); in the Greek writers, it is an assumption as old as Origen, who refers to the woman as the man's μητρυνία. This judgment as to Jerome's understanding of the relationship of the woman to the man's father is borne out by his remark in his commentary on Isaiah, that the man had the *uxorem* of his father.⁸

B. VERSES 3-5

1) The only reference I have been able to discover to vv. 3-4, apart from v. 5, of the Corinthian text, is an allusion in Jerome's comments on Matt. 7:1-2, in his commentary on that book. He notes that the commandment not to judge is not always

⁴PL XXVI, 390.

⁵Ibid., 399.

⁶Epistula XLIX (XLVIII, Vall.), 4; CSEL LXIV, p. 356.

⁷Adversus Jovinianum I, 8; PL XXIII, 231.

⁸CCL LXXIII, p. 238.

binding, since Paul judged the *fornicantem* in Corinth, and Peter demonstrated (by judgment) Ananias and Sapphira to be liars.⁹ The coupling of the Corinthian episode with the story from Acts 5:1-11 is perhaps significant of Jerome's thinking here; the punishment, as with Chrysostom and Ambrose, in particular, may involve something more than excommunication.

2) When Jerome refers to I Cor. 5:5, he often couples it with a citation of I Tim. 1:20, since he is aware of the similar wording (*tradidi Satanae*) in these verses. The next portion of this chapter will examine his references to these verses in tandem.

A) In four passages (two in his commentary on Isaiah¹⁰, one in his commentary on Jeremiah¹¹, one in his commentary on Ezekiel¹²), he follows Origen's lead in interpreting Nebuchadnezzar, to whom Jerusalem is to be surrendered, as representing the devil (cf. above). The first of Jerome's references is particularly important: He is treating Isa. 14:4b-6, Israel's taunt song against the King of Babylon in the day of her [future] deliverance. The song begins, *Quomodo cessavit exactor, quievit tributum?* Jerome notes:

Ergo cum Israel de seruitute dura fuerit liberatus, sumet parabolam contra regem Babylonis, quam debemus intelligere ut parabolam. si enim contra Nabuchodonosor sermo est, et simplex historiae expositio, quomodo parabola dicitur, quae nulli alteri παραβάλλεται, id est, *comparatur*. Miratur ergo Israel quomodo cessaverit exactor, qui exigere consueuerat usque ad nouissimum quadrantem. Exigere autem consuetus non alios nisi debitores, qui dicunt in oratione dominica: **dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris**. Huic exactori debitores traduntur a iudice, qui eos mittit in carcerem et exigit usque ad peccatum minimum. denique et Paulus apostolus Corinthium fornicantem, qui uxorem

⁹CCL LXXVII, p. 41.

¹⁰CCL LXXIII, pp. 238 and 312.

¹¹CCL LXXIV, pp. 264-5.

¹²CCL LXXV, p. 222.

patris acceperat, necnon Phygellum et Hermogenem tradidit exactori.¹³

This passage reveals some of Jerome's exegetical principles, as well as his skill in making verbal connections. His insistence that, as a parable, this taunt song must contain a deeper meaning, touches on his love of looking for the spiritual sense of a passage. This is particularly understandable in this commentary, since Jerome has expressed his desire to "show that Isaiah was not only a prophet, but an evangelist and an apostle"¹⁴. So in his exposition the pattern of this richly variegated poetic tapestry is revealed as anticipating Christ, his incarnation, passion and resurrection, and the Church."¹⁵ Pierre Jay has remarked:

La "lettre" ou "l'histoire"—les deux termes sont le plus souvent équivalents—constitue un premier niveau d'interprétation jugé profitable aux "gens simples". Mais, précise ailleurs Jérôme, "*moi aussi le lettre m'édifie*". Encore ne faut-il pas s'y enliser "à la manière juive". Il arrive de toute façon qu'elle soit tout simplement intenable, ou à tout le moins inutile. Il convient alors de "mettre au jour dans l'esprit ce qui est caché dans le lettre." Mais il n'y a pas moins à "rechercher l'esprit" lorsque "l'histoire est manifeste et la lettre évidente". Car, comme le prédicateur amène ses auditeurs à le constater, "de l'histoire même nous nous élevons peu à peu aux mystères sacrés".¹⁶

Yet, unlike Origen, Jerome sticks much closer to the meaning of the passage, not interpreting it in the light of the church procedure of his day. Von Campenhausen has noted Jerome's increasing tendency as he grew older to allow the mystical interpretation of a text to be crowded out by the historical-philological exposition, but

This did not yet mean to Jerome, however, that he had therefore rejected the "higher", allegorical interpretation, or even that he considered it

¹³CCL LXXIII, p. 238.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 3-4; cited by Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 301.

¹⁵Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 301.

¹⁶Jay, "Jérôme et la pratique de l'exégèse", *Le monde latin antique et la Bible*, p. 531.

superfluous...What he demanded with increasing emphasis was only that the literal, historical exegesis should not be found inferior to the allegorical speculation, and in principle should precede it. One must not interpret a writing allegorically without any knowledge whatever of the historical context, as he himself had done in his youth...¹⁷

The passage cited above illustrates the truth of this statement; we see Jerome tempted to discover a deeper meaning in the passage under observation, but he is far more cautious in his approach than Origen is when dealing with passages concerning Nebuchadnezzar (cf. above).

It must be noted that in this passage Jerome does not flatly state that Nebuchadnezzar *is* Satan; rather, he says that as Nebuchadnezzar serves as an executioner (*exactor*), so does the devil. This concept of the executioner, fulfilling the divine will, has been seen to be very important especially among the writers of the School of Antioch, but Origen is the first to use it; the public executioner (δῆμιος) carries out the sentences imposed by the higher authorities on criminals. The current passage is not the only one in Jerome's works to utilise this category in understanding the Pauline language.

It should also be noted *en passant* that Jerome confuses the names of the two who have been surrendered to Satan; Phygellus and Hermogenes appear in II Tim. 1:15, but it is Hymenaeus and Alexander who are mentioned in I Tim. 1:20. As has been seen earlier in this thesis, Jerome is not the only one to err at this point.

The other passage from Jerome's commentary on Isaiah is far more spiritualising in its emphasis. He is discussing Isa. 23:12-13, which describes the punishment of Tyre. Just as Tyre will not find rest until it comes to worship God, so the soul searching for satisfaction outside of God will experience deprivation similar to those of Tyre:

¹⁷von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Latin Church*, p. 165.

Rursumque si cupiat ire ad Chaldaeos, et ubertate eorum ac rerum omnium abundantia perfrui, etiam illos inveniat desolatos, arguentibus Assyriis eorum sterilitatem, iuxta quod et apostolus tradidit peccatores **satanae, ut discant non blasphemare**: qui traduntur **in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus fiat**.¹⁸

Here Jerome does not specify what the *interitum carnis* is; whatever it may be, the context of the passages from Isaiah imply that it will be remedial, since Tyre was to be rebuilt after seventy years.

In his commentary on Jeremiah, Jerome asserts that it is not only the Lord who surrenders people (*gentes*) to Nebuchadnezzar, but that the apostle Paul has done it, too, when he surrendered some to Satan so that they might learn not to blaspheme (I Tim. 1:20) and another for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved (I Cor. 5:5).¹⁹ This passage comes much closer to Origen's language, in its near equation of Nebuchadnezzar with Satan. Jerome attaches no further commentary here.

In Jerome's commentary on Ezekiel, one important passage clarifies what he understands the *interitum carnis* to be, at least in part. In his comments on Ezek. 17:19, the parable/allegory of the eagle and the vine, warning Jerusalem of impending destruction because of King Zedekiah's violation of his oath to serve Nebuchadnezzar, Jerome asserts:

ponitque testamentum, cum his quos ceperit, ut regi Babylonio colla submittant, et impleant illud quod Apostolus loquitur: **quos tradidi satanae, ut discant non blasphemare**. et in alio loco: **quos tradidi**, inquit, **satanae in interitum carnis, ut spiritus saluus fiat**. Non debemus ergo, si forsitan ob aliquod peccatum de congregatione fratrum et de domo dei eiicimur, reluctari: sed aequo animo illatam in nos ferre sententiam, et dicere cum propheta, **iram domini**

¹⁸CCL LXXIII, p. 312.

¹⁹CCL LXXIV, pp. 264-5.

sustinebo, quoniam peccavi ei, donec justificet causam meam [Micah 7:9], et caetera.²⁰

Once more, the language resembles that of Origen in coupling the work of Nebuchadnezzar and the work of Satan. However, what is particularly important here is Jerome's reference to being ejected from the house of God; he clearly understands this to be part of what is involved in the *interitum carnis*. The citation from Micah is instructive, too; it will be remembered that Ambrose cites this passage in a similar context (cf. previous chapter).

B) In his commentary on Joel, Jerome combines I Cor. 5:5 and I Tim. 1:20 in his remarks on Joel 2:25-7, in which God promises the Israelites that he will repay them for the years lost to the locust invasion.²¹ In a discussion of the power of God, Jerome asserts that the cherubim and seraphim stand at God's right hand, but at his left hand are *contrariae fortitudines*; he refers to the story of the king of Israel and the prophet Micaiah (I Kings 22:13-28), in which a spirit offers to be a lying spirit in the mouth of the Israelite prophets. Jerome continues:

Non solum enim homines ministri sunt, et ultores irae eius, in his qui malum operantur, et non sine causa portant gladium, sed etiam contrariae fortitudines, quae appellantur furor et ira dei, quos propheta declinans ait: **domine, ne in furore tuo arguas me, neque in ira tua corripas me** [Ps. 6:1]. istiusmodi, ut ita dicam, quaestionariis atque tortoribus tradidit apostolus peccatores **in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus fieret**, de quibus et satanas est, cui tradidit alios **ut discerent non blasphemare**.²²

After this, Jerome turns his attention to the promise of restoration, adding this important passage:

²⁰CCL LXXV, p. 222.

²¹Kelly, *Jerome*, p. 294, notes that Jerome refuses to accept this as a historical event; the "locusts" are the four passions of grief, joy, hope, and fear.

²²CCL LXXVI, p. 191.

vos quoque quos juste post paenitentiam uoco filios
Sion et ecclesiae, laetamini atque gaudete, quia dedit
uobis deus pater doctorem iustitiae, siue tribuit uobis
alimenta iustitiae, et descendere fecit ad uos pluuias
temporaneas atque serotinas.²³

Thus, the punishments inflicted on sinners are meant to draw them back to the service of God. What is particularly important here is Jerome's use of the words *quaestionariis atque tortoribus* [executioners and torturers]. In a previous passage, he has used the term *exactor*, which falls into the same category. As with Chrysostom and Ambrose, Jerome thinks of the punishment in the light of the position occupied by the public executioner, who was to carry out the orders of his superiors. In this case, Satan carries out the orders of God in such a way that serious offenders are reconciled to the Church. Jerome reiterates much of this in Book II, 7 of *Contra Rufinum*, when, citing both I Tim. 1:20 and I Cor. 5:5, he says, *Tradidit eos Satanae quasi tortori ad puniendum...*²⁴

C) Another extremely important reference to I Cor. 5:5 occurs in Jerome's comments on Ezekiel 16, which describes the harlotry of Israel. God's surrender of Israel to her enemies, says Jerome, is like that mentioned in I Cor. 5. This is part of a *catena* of scriptural quotations on the topic of the flesh. Jerome asserts that, in the saint, fleshly things decrease daily and are weakened through the virtues of the devout Christian, *ita ut nequaquam caro appelletur, sed spiritus...* He continues:

quamobrem et corinthius fornicator traditur in interitum
carnis ut spiritus saluus fiat. de hac carne scriptum est:
**omnis caro fenum, et omnis gloria eius quasi flos
feni. Aruit fenum, et flos eius decidit: uerbum autem
domini manet in aeternum** [Isa. 40:6-7]. de qua et
apostolus loquebatur: **caro et sanguis regnum dei non
possidebunt** [I Cor. 15:50]. et in Genesi loquitur deus:
**non permanebit spiritus meus in hominibus istis,
quia caro sunt.** et ad credentes dicitur: **qui in carne
sunt, deo placere non possunt. uos autem non estis**

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴*CCL LXXIX*, pp. 38-9.

in carne, sed in spiritu [Rom. 8:8-9]. Alia autem caro sanctorum est, de qua scriptum est: **omnis caro uidebit salutare dei** [Isa. 40:5].²⁵

Jerome's words here contain several important items: first, in the passage immediately preceding, his assertion that Christians are no longer called "flesh" but "spirit" is very unusual. However, it is not quite unique; Epiphanius of Salamis²⁶ makes the same assertion, as does Ambrosiaster²⁷. Second, his statement, that the flesh of the saints is different, is noteworthy; regeneration evidently affects the entire make-up of the Christian. It is only Christian flesh which will see the salvation of God. This may refer to Jerome's belief in the resurrection of the body; on the other hand, he may foresee the flesh rejoicing because it has been made spiritual. Either way, he avoids dualism, but he posits a dichotomy between flesh which has been made spiritual and that which has not.

D) In his commentary on Galatians, Jerome has an important reference to I Corinthians 5. He is treating Gal. 5:9, which contains another Pauline use of *modicum fermentum totam conspersionem fermentat*. Jerome notes that other codices have *corrumpit* for *fermentat*. He then states:

Haec autem ipsa sententia Paulus et ad Corinthios utitur; ubi praecepit eum qui uxorem patris sui habebat, tolli de medio, et tradi paenitentiae in interitum et vexationem carnis per jejunia et aegrotationes, ut spiritus salvus fiat in die Domini...²⁸

This citation is very significant, since Jerome's use of *aegrotationes* implies that he envisions something in the way of illness or bodily suffering to be involved in the sentence imposed by Paul. Although we have seen that he believes in the eventual restoration of the offender, he does not deal with that possibility here. The mention of

²⁵CCL LXXV, p. 189.

²⁶cf. Appendix B, following the chapter on the Cappadocians.

²⁷cf. preceding chapter, under "The Remainder of I Corinthians 5".

²⁸PL XXVI, 429.

aegrotationes places Jerome in the company of John Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Ambrosiaster (cf. above). Also, Jerome's exegesis of the verses shows his contextual awareness; there is no attempt here to spiritualise or personalise the text. He is aware that the expulsion is to be of a flagrant offender from the congregation, not a personal cleansing from sin for each member of the congregation in Corinth.²⁹

E) Two references in Jerome's works on the Psalms call for observation:

1) In his treatment of Ps. 100 (LXX) in *Commentarioli in Psalmos*, he comments on the versicle, *In matutino interficiebam omnes peccatores terrae*. He asserts:

Hoc et apostolus ait: **Auferte malum de medio vestrum**. Si civitas Domini ecclesia Xpisti [*sic*] est, quicumque facit iniquitatem, de civitate Dei exterminandus est.³⁰

Here Jerome states his belief that an offender must be excommunicated from the congregation; as has been seen, Jerome believes that a penitent sinner will be restored, and therefore *interficiebam* (in the text from Psalms) and *exterminandus est* will be interpreted in a spiritualising manner, referring to excommunication. Jerome firmly holds to the necessity of ridding the congregation of sin.

2) The other reference occurs in his *Tractatus de Psalmo LXXXIII* (LXX) and is unique in its content. Discussing the versicle, *Cor meum et caro mea exultavit in Deum vivum*, Jerome says:

Difficile est, ut et cor et caro alicuius in commune consentiant. Si enim secundum apostolum spiritus pugnat contra carnem et caro contra spiritum, quomodo hic dicit: Cor meum et caro mea exultavit? Hoc non potest dicere, nisi ille qui in amore Dei tota mente fixus est. **Cor meum et caro mea**. Illud est quod dicit in alio

²⁹Jerome follows the passage just cited with a *discursus* on "leaven", which he interprets in the light of Matt. 16:6, saying that the Pharisaic leaven which Jesus warned against is the observation of the Law according to the flesh.

³⁰*Commentarioli in Psalmos* (*Anecdota Maredsolana* III, 1), pp. 73-4.

loco: **"Sitivit in te anima mea, quam multipliciter tibi caro mea."** Et caro mea. Ista est caro quae desiderat Dominum, de qua in alio loco dicitur **"Omnis caro faenum"**, non desiderat Dominum. **Cor meum et caro mea.** Vide mihi aliquem abinentem, qui mortem carnis suae lucrum putat animae suae. Hoc autem carnis sunt ieiunia et iniuriae. Denique et apostolus quid dicit? **"Quem tradidi satanae in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus fiat"**. Nisi caro mortua fuerit, spiritus vivificari non potest. propterea dicit et apostolus: **"Quando infirmor, tunc fortior sum"**.³¹

This passage, delivered in a monastic setting, is completely unlike any other passages in Jerome's writings utilising I Cor. 5:5. In the interest of ascetic devotion, the original context of I Corinthians 5 is utterly ignored. Paul's stern words have become merely part of the difficult monastic path to perfection, achieved by the denial of the flesh (*spiritus* here must denote the human spirit). The passage has certain similarities to Jerome's comments on Ezekiel 16 (cf. above, p. 8), when he insists that there are different types of flesh. Here he says that what makes the difference in the type of flesh is absolute devotion to God; then the flesh is being put to death, desiring God instead of earthly pleasures. This passage illustrates what Bertrand de Margérie has called Jerome's "mysticisme biblique". He states:

L'ascèse de Jérôme, toute centrée sur l'acquisition de la connaissance intime des Écritures lues dans leurs langues originelles, débouche dans un mysticisme biblique, dans une expérience biblique de Dieu et de l'Église.³²

Jerome's use of the Corinthian text in this context also reminds us of his preference for the spiritual sense of Scripture:

En effet, l'Écriture est aux yeux de Jérôme une mer trop profonde, trop pleine d'abîmes mystérieux, même dans les parties qui semblent les plus faciles, pour que la

³¹*Tractatus sive Homiliae in Psalmos, in Marci evangelium, et al.*, p. 87 (*Anecdota Maredsolana* III, 2), p. 87.

³²de Margérie, II, p. 177.

richesse de son fonds soit d'ordinaire épuisée par une interprétation superficielle.³³

F) Two final references to I Cor. 5:5 may be summarised briefly: in *Epistle CIX* to Riparius, he is discussing the problem of Vigilantius, and he expresses his wonder that the latter's bishop seems to put up with him, *et non uirga apostolica uirgaque ferrea confringere uas inutile et tradere in interitum carnis, ut spiritus saluus fiat*.³⁴ This passage shows that Jerome believes that the bishops have the apostolic power to excommunicate; he does not comment further here. The other reference occurs in Book I, 8 of *Contra Jovinianum*, in which Jerome asserts his belief once again that the offender in I Cor. 5 is the same as the penitent man in II Cor. 2.³⁵

C. THE REMAINDER OF I CORINTHIANS 5

1) Jerome's reference to I Cor. 5:6, cited under D) immediately above, is his most explicit reference to that text in context; we have already noted that he believes that it teaches the necessity of the expulsion of the offender from the Christian congregation. His other references to 5:6 appear in various works; in his commentary on Ezekiel, discussing how the house of Israel defiled the temple by bringing in those who were uncircumcised in heart and flesh, he notes that *modicum enim fermentum totam massam corrumpit*;³⁶ likewise, in *Epistle 92*, in which he castigates Origen and his heresies, he asserts that *et tam Origenem quam discipulos eius consona uoce damnauius, ne modicum fermentum totam massam corrumperet*.³⁷ In his commentary on Matthew, in his discussion of Jesus's warning to his disciples to beware the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt. 16:6), he notes that Jesus is referring to their teaching, but that *scriptura testatur quod obliti sint eos secum*

³³*Ibid.*, p. 167.

³⁴*CSEL* LV, p. 353.

³⁵*PL* XXIII, 231.

³⁶*CCL* LXXV, p. 649.

³⁷*CSEL* LV, p. 149.

*tollere. Hoc est fermentum, de quo et apostolus loquitur: Modicum fermentum totam massam corrumpit.*³⁸ Lastly, in his commentary on Joel 2:16, he treats the words *Sanctificate ecclesiam*, saying that this must be done *ut nullus in ecclesia non sanctus sit, ne forsitan impedianur orationes vestrae, et modicum fermentum totam massam corrumpat.*³⁹ This passage comes closer to the original context, since Jerome is aware that the presence of an unsanctified person may impede the prayers of the congregation, but these citations of I Cor. 5:6 add little to our understanding of his exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5.

2) Jerome's references to 5:7 are likewise unhelpful in discerning his thought on the earlier portion of I Corinthians 5. Twice he utilises it typologically, when he is demonstrating how Christ has fulfilled (and abrogated) the Old Testament (in his comments on Ezekiel 45:18-25⁴⁰ and Titus 1:14⁴¹, which reference also includes a passing mention of I Cor. 5:8). Two letters included in the Hieronymian corpus of letters, both of which cite 5:7, are not by Jerome; *Epistle 149*, containing a typological reference to 5:7, is spurious⁴². Also included among the works of Jerome is his translation of Pachomiana, including a letter of Abbot Theodore, who cites I Cor. 5:7 in a letter calling his monks to a proper paschal celebration.⁴³

3) Jerome's four references to I Cor. 5:8 in isolation also reveal little else about his understanding of vv. 3-5. Treating Ezek. 36:37-8 in his commentary on that prophet, he notes that when God multiplies Israel *sicut gregem hominum, ut gregem sanctum, ut gregem Ierusalem in solemnitatibus eius*, the latter phrase is fulfilled

³⁸CCL LXXVII, pp. 137-8.

³⁹CCL LXXVI, p. 184.

⁴⁰CCL LXXV, p. 689.

⁴¹PL XXVI, 610.

⁴²according to CPL 620 (p. 141) and Gribomont (*Patrology* IV, p. 241); the letter is found in CSEL LVI, p. 357ff.

⁴³PL XXIII, 104.

*quando comedimus azyma sinceritatis et veritatis...*⁴⁴. The change to the first person plural reveals Jerome's idea that it is the Church which fulfils the prophecy. Likewise, in his commentary on Galatians, Jerome joins with Paul in decrying that, *dies observatis, et menses, et tempora, et annos...* (Gal. 4:10), saying that this is what Jews do, walking *in fermento veteri malitiae et nequitiae Pharisaeorum...*⁴⁵. This verse is interesting because Paul's emphasis is that these things should be absent from the life of the Christian; the Apostle stresses the positive character of the Christian life. Jerome turns the thrust of Paul's writing around here, asserting that the Jews are guilty of these things. Thirdly, in *Epistle LXXVIII* (to Fabiola), Jerome discusses the progress of Israel from Egypt toward the Holy Land in a spiritualising manner: Christians are the new Israel, who no longer eat from the *fermento Egypti, de fermento malitiae et nequitiae*, but instead partake of the *azymis sinceritatis et veritatis*.⁴⁶ Finally, in *Epistle CXXVIII* (to Pacatula), Jerome discusses the value of chastity (celibacy), noting that the lips of meretricious women distill honey, which is something not to be offered in the Jewish sacrifices; in contrast, Christians are to eat the *pascha* with bitter things, *in azymis sinceritatis et ueritatis*.⁴⁷ The passage is interesting in revealing Jerome's asceticism, but it tells us nothing more about his understanding of I Cor. 5:3-5.

4) A reference to 5:11 occurs in *Contra Helvidium*. In his insistence to prove that "brother" does not always mean biological brother, Jerome cites I Cor. 5:11, which reads, *Si quis frater nominatur fornicator*, etc., to prove his point. Again, nothing is contributed to our knowledge of his understanding of I Cor. 5:3-5.

⁴⁴CCL LXXV, p. 508.

⁴⁵PL XXVI, 403.

⁴⁶CSEL LV, p. 54.

⁴⁷CSEL LVI, p. 158.

D. I TIMOTHY 1:20

In addition to the passages already cited which use I Tim. 1:20, three others merit our attention. In his commentary on Jeremiah, Jerome is discussing the invasion of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 25:8, RSV), and he asserts:

Mittit autem dominus uel angelos, ut concitent gentes, uel certe huiuscemodi mouet cogitationes, ut faciant domini uoluntatem. quodque uocat seruum suum Nabuchodonosor, non sic 'seruus' uocatur ut prophetae et omnes sancti, qui uere seruiunt domino, sed quo in euersione Ierusalem, domini seruiat uoluntati: secundum quod et apostolus loquitur: **quod tradidi satanae, ut discant non blasphemare.**⁴⁸

We have noted earlier Jerome's tendency to follow Origen in identifying Nebuchadnezzar with Satan, as well as his insistence (with Chrysostom and Ambrose) that Satan is really doing the will of God in this punishment. The context, i.e., the punishment of Jerusalem, followed by restoration, is important, since we have already noted Jerome's observation that the *traditio satanae* is to be remedial. Likewise, in his comments on Ezekiel 27:7-14, which concerns the destruction of Tyre, Jerome says that this happened *iuxta quod et apostolus dicit: quos tradidi satanae, ut discant non blasphemare.*⁴⁹ He adds no further comment. More important is a passage in his commentary on Habakkuk; treating 1:7 of that book, he describes Nebuchadnezzar as *terribilis et inlustris*. The text continues: *ex ipso iudicium eius erit, et assumptio eius ab eo egredietur*. Jerome draws a parallel between Nebuchadnezzar and Satan; each is *inlustris* because he assumes divine power to himself. Jerome continues, in reference to those who scorn Nebuchadnezzar/Satan:

Ipsi enim secundum apostolum tradentur ad poenam, **ut discant non blasphemare.** a quo qui egerit paenitentiam, et ad deum conuersus fuerit, egreditur,

⁴⁸CCL LXXIV, p. 239.

⁴⁹CCL LXXV, pp.351-2.

cum prius manibus illius teneretur, et esset Chaldaei assumptio.⁵⁰

This passage is important for stressing afresh Jerome's firm belief in the remedial power of penance; once it has done its work, the penitents are ready for reconciliation. This citation also shows the necessity for penance, in Jerome's thinking: it is the ones who refuse to do penance who are held by Satan, even as those in Jerusalem who resisted Nebuchadnezzar strongly were the ones who were destroyed.

This brings us to the end of Jerome's comments on I Cor. 5 and related passages. In spite of the lack of an extended theological discursus on the passage itself, or of a commentary, he has left enough material for us to understand his views on the chapter. It is abundantly clear that he identifies the offender of I Cor. 5 with the penitent man of II Cor. 2; in this he follows the nearly unanimous tradition of the early church.⁵¹ Consequently, he believes that forgiveness is possible for even the most serious sins, in this life. Penance is temporary and remedial. The punishment may involve illness (*aegrotationes*). Satan is seen as an executioner, carrying out the plan of God when he afflicts sinning Christians. The context of Jerome's use of *spiritus* strongly favours the idea that he understands it as being the *human* spirit, not the Holy Spirit, which is to be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Perhaps his most startling conclusion is that "the flesh of the saints is different", which we have seen in his comments on Ezek. 16:6, as well as his statement that it is only the mortified flesh which can rejoice in God (in his *Tractatus in Psalmum LXXXIII*).

The influence of Origen and the Alexandrian school is clear, particularly in the Old Testament commentaries, when Jerome looks for the spiritual sense; nevertheless, he is generally more cautious than the Alexandrians in holding to the primacy of the literal sense of the Scripture⁵². The one exception is his placing of the Corinthian text

⁵⁰CCL LXXVIA, p. 587.

⁵¹Tertullian, in *De pudicitia*, being the notable exception.

⁵²At least, the Scriptures which he discusses in relation to I Cor. 5:3-5.

in a monastic context, using it to describe the path of perfection for the committed soul. However, in spite of Jerome's zeal for asceticism, he normally avoids interpreting the Corinthian text in this fashion and understands it within the disciplinary structure of the Church. De Margérie has noted that a constant factor in Jerome's exēgesis is an "interpretation ecclesiale"⁵³. In this respect Jerome is a true disciple of Origen, who interprets the Corinthian text in the light of the penitential practice of the church of his day, just as Jerome does. Once again, Jerome is far more cautious in making a strict equivalency between the punishment imposed on the offender in I Corinthians 5 and what was happening in the church of his own day; he tells us less about the procedure. Neither does he address the question of whether the bishops are full heirs of the apostolic powers, although in another context he remarks, "With us, the bishops hold the place of the Apostles".⁵⁴

Thus, with the one exception of the placing of the Corinthian text in a monastic context, Jerome's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 shows a remarkable consistency. It never changes, even when he dovetails his references to it into various other texts. In retrospect, I think that de Margérie's estimate of Jerome's exegesis as in "interpretation ecclesiale"⁵⁵ captures a great deal of Jerome's approach to the Corinthian text. Even with his love of the spiritual sense of Scripture, he never tries to spiritualise church practice, since for him it is the single most reliable standard of judgment. This is one of the things that curtails his fancy when his spiritual imagination is tempted to assume control.

⁵³de Margérie, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

⁵⁴*Epistle XLI*, 3. Jerome's famous remark in *Epistle 146* should be mentioned here; he remarks that, in Alexandria, until the time of Dionysius, the presbyters elected one of their own number as bishop. Since Jerome is aware of a certain amount of variety in the election of bishops, this may be one reason why he is hesitant to assert full and complete continuity between the apostolic power and contemporary episcopal power.

⁵⁵cf. preceding paragraph.

II. PELAGIUS

With one exception, Pelagius's references to I Corinthians 5 and related passages occur only in his *Expositiones XIII Epistularum Pauli*.

A. VERSES 1-2

Pelagius's comments on the concluding verses of I Corinthians 4 will have some bearing on our understanding of his exegesis of chapter 5. In treating Paul's words, *Quid uultis? in uirga ueniam ad uos, an in caritate et spiritu mansuetudinis?* (I Cor. 4:21), Pelagius remarks:

Benignus magister discipulorum correctionem in eorum potestate dimittit, ut, si paenitere uellent, clementissimus consolator adesset, si autem nollent durus ultor adsisteret peccatorum. ["in uirga" enim,] quali uirga Petrus [ad] Ananiam et Sapphiram, et ipse Paulus ad magum.⁵⁶

Although he does not develop his argument here, Pelagius obviously believes that Paul is genuinely able to impose the kind of punishment he will mention in I Cor. 5. His reference to two of the most drastic incidents of punishment by the apostles in Acts indicates that he has a serious penalty in mind when he is discussing I Corinthians 5.

When he comes to the opening verses of chapter 5, Pelagius has nothing to say about the nature of the relationship between the man and the woman. He says that Paul refers to the rumour of the fornication in their midst to demonstrate why he has warned them of his possible coming with a rod. In his treatment of the versicle, *Et talis fornicatio qualis nec inter gentes, ita ut uxorem patris [ali]quis habeat*, he says, *In ecclesia, cui uos praeesse uidemini*. This passage is odd; we are not told who presides, although the *uos* seems to refer to the Corinthian Christians collectively; certainly, there is no mention of the leadership of the congregation here, although it may be implied; an alternative is that Pelagius is referring to the various factions

⁵⁶Pelagi *Expositiones XIII Epistularum Pauli*, p. 150.

within the Church at Corinth⁵⁷. This is perhaps the correct interpretation: if any of the factions truly presides, then the offender should have been expelled from their midst. The implication is that Paul will have to do what the congregation should already have done.

His remarks on v. 2a (*Et uos inflati estis, et non magis luctum habuistis*) are important:

Uana scientia inflamini, et curam de his qui pereunt non habe[bi]tis, ut aut corrigant aut ab ecclesia separentur, cum bonos pastores semper [magis] legamus populi deflesse peccata, ut Hieremiam, qui ait: **quis dabit capiti meo aquam, et oculis meis fontem lacrimarum?** ut ostenderet sibi non affectum doloris, sed lacrimas defecisse.⁵⁸

We note that Pelagius, in line 2 of the citation, lists two possibilities for interpretation: correction of the sinners, or their expulsion. This is pursued in his comments on 2b, *ut tollatur de medio uestrum qui hoc opus fecit*:

Siue: Homo qui peccauit tollatur. Siue: Satanas eiciatur, dum non habet per quem operetur.⁵⁹

Thus, Pelagius gives two possibilities for interpretation: either the ejection of the sinner, or of his sin (I read this as meaning, "Let Satan be cast out, so that he will have no one through whom to work").⁶⁰ He does not indicate his personal preference here, although the one he lists first may indicate his idea of the correct exegesis. This use of *siue* characterises much of Pelagius's expositions on the Pauline epistles. Referring to the style in which they are written, Souter describes them thus:

The shortness of the notes is probably the first characteristic that strikes the reader. They are often

⁵⁷e.g., I Cor. 1:10-12, 3:4-9.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*

⁶⁰Pelagius's words in the final option could be construed as exorcism, although he makes no further reference to it. It is more likely that he is referring to our cleansing ourselves from sin.

shorter than the passage commented on, but they never lack point. Yet, short as they are, they often provide alternative explanations.⁶¹

⁶¹Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 215.

B. VERSES 3-5

Pelagius's comments on v. 3, *Ego quidem, ut absens corpore, praesens autem spiritu, iam iudicaui ut praesens eum qui sic operatus est*, are brief but revealing:

Praesentem se esse dicit in spiritu, ne ex solo auditu
[absentem] damnare putaretur, secundum illud Helisaei
dicentis ad Giezi: "nonne spiritus meus tecum erat in
uia?"⁶²

Here we encounter the passage from II Kings 5:26, concerning Elisha's statement to Gehazi after the latter had falsely solicited a reward from Naaman. Other fathers have cited the same passage in this context; Origen⁶³ and John Chrysostom⁶⁴ among the Greek writers both refer to this story when referring to Paul's words, and among the Latin writers, Ambrosiaster does the same thing in his comments on Col. 2:5.⁶⁵ Pelagius does not add further comment here. However, the similarity to Ambrosiaster, in particular, should be noted, since Souter has called attention to some clear use of Ambrosiaster's writings by Pelagius.⁶⁶

In the following clause, *In nomine domini nostri Iesu Christi, congregatis uobis et meo spiritu cum uirtute domini [nostri] Iesu [Christi]*, Pelagius once again offers two possibilities for interpretation:

Qui pro me erit praesens. Siue: In litterarum mearum
auctoritate, per quam domini quoque uirtus adsistet.⁶⁷

Although he does not add further remarks, we can see that by either interpretation he believes that the power is the Lord's power, not Paul's own. *Cum uirtute domini* is coupled to *et meo spiritu*, and not to the congregational assembly; we see Pelagius's high estimation of the apostolic office. It will be shown below that Pelagius believes

⁶²*Expositiones*, *op. cit.*

⁶³In his *Catenae* on I Cor. 5.

⁶⁴In *Homily XV* on I Corinthians.

⁶⁵In his commentary on the Pauline Epistles.

⁶⁶Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 226.

⁶⁷*Expositiones*, *op. cit.*

that the apostles had the power of knowing what was occurring in other places⁶⁸, but here he asserts that any power exerted will not be apostolic, but dominical. His idea that Paul's presence may be by letter only is a new one in the course of this thesis; it is unique.

In his comments on v. 5, Pelagius maintains that *tradere Satanae in interitum carnis* signifies

Ut arripiendi illum corporaliter habeat potestatem, ut, cum uiderit se nec carnis hic nec in futuro spiritus requiem habiturum, de facto paeniteat et saluetur. Siue: Si[c] quisque pro meritis suis de ecclesia pellitur, Satanae traditur potestati, ut, dum caro eius per paenitentiam adflicta quendam interitum patitur, spiritus conseruetur. habet enim consuetudinem scriptura ut hominem in parte totum intellegat. Siue: Ita, quia et hic scripturae mos est ut in carne carnalis actus interire, in spiritu uero spiritalis conuersatio salua fieri demonstretur.⁶⁹

Pelagius's familiar method of offering several options for understanding the Scripture is obvious here. He obviously construes *spiritus* as the man's own spirit, not the Holy Spirit⁷⁰ or the spirit of the church⁷¹; his remark that Scripture, when it refers to the parts of a man (i.e., body, spirit, *et al.*), signifies the total person, is unique among the writers studied in this thesis. He seems to offer two ideas as to what the *interitum carnis* itself is: bodily discomfort ("he will have no rest here in his body", in the first option) or the afflictions suffered by penitents (in the second option). In this latter possibility, he resembles Origen, who sees no difficulty in understanding the ὀλεθρον τῆς σαρκὸς as the discomforts endured by penitents (an identification which Tertullian heartily rejects in *De pudicitia*). Also apparent in this passage is Pelagius's belief that, whatever the punishment may involve, it is remedial, meant to restore the

⁶⁸cf. Pelagius's comments on Col. 2:5 below.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 151-2.

⁷⁰as in Ambrosiaster, *loc. cit.*

⁷¹as in Tertullian, *De pudicitia*.

man to grace. The third option he offers involves a more spiritualising, personal approach to the text; the *carnality* of the flesh is to be destroyed so that the Christian can demonstrate healthy spiritual conduct. This approaches Origen's thinking, that *σαρκὸς* refers to the *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός*⁷²; however, Pelagius still seems to imply some sort of crisis; it is not a daily occurrence, but something which occurs in the life of a Christian who has fallen into serious sin.

Pelagius's remarks on the final clause of v. 5, *ut spiritus saluus sit in die domini [nostri] Iesu [Christi]*, are brief and unique:

Quoniam in spiritu[m] Satanus accipere non potest
potestatem, [ut] domini iudicio reseruetur.⁷³

The difficulty of this passage is determining whether *spiritus* refers to the man's spirit, or to the Holy Spirit. If the former, then Pelagius may be thinking along the lines of Job 2:6, in which Satan is allowed to inflict great injury on Job, but he must spare Job's life; or, Pelagius may be referring to the *penitent*; Satan will have no control over his spirit, since he is repenting of his sin, although the body of the offender will be vulnerable to the power of evil. However, if *spiritus* refers to the Holy Spirit, then Pelagius resembles Ambrosiaster in the latter's idea that the Holy Spirit is to be reserved in the Church. It has been shown by A.J. Smith that Ambrosiaster was one of Pelagius's sources⁷⁴; since this is the case, the possibility that *spiritus* here refers to the Holy Spirit cannot be ruled out. However, the brevity of Pelagius's comments do not enable us to arrive at a definite conclusion in the matter. His thinking, in the light of the earlier portion of his comments on v. 5, seems to be that penance is to be remedial; if properly fulfilled, then the punishment will cease and both body and spirit will enjoy the grace of God. However, if punishment is not accepted, and penance remains undone, then the sinner's body will continue to undergo difficulty, while his

⁷²cf. his *Catena* on I Corinthians 5.

⁷³*Expositiones*, p. 152.

⁷⁴*JThS* 19 (1918), pp. 162-230.

spirit will be retained in the power of the Lord for the judgment, or *by* the judgment of the Lord.⁷⁵ If *spiritus* is construed as the Holy Spirit, then Pelagius is saying that the fallen Christian is devoid of *spiritus*.

C. THE REMAINDER OF I CORINTHIANS 5

In I Cor. 5:6, Pelagius interprets Paul's question, *nescitis quia modicum fermentum totam massam corrumpit?* as, "Do you not know that many may die by a bad example?"; he illustrates this by noting that through the sin of one, "we read that the wrath of God came upon all the people of the Jews"⁷⁶ (probably a reference to the sin of Achan, as a result of which Israel suffered defeat; Joshua 7:1-5).

Pelagius's comments on 5:7a are as follows:

Nihil in uobis conuersationis pristinae relinquatis, quod sinceritate[m] possit naturae corrumpere.⁷⁷

Pelagius's brevity at this point causes difficulty for the interpreter. If his comments reveal a spiritualising, individual interpretation of I Cor. 5:7, so that all Christians are to cleanse themselves, then *naturae* could refer to the nature of the Church; the purity of the Church may be lost by allowing in its midst those who still cling to their old behaviour. However, if the passage is interpreted individualistically⁷⁸, then it reveals some of Pelagius's distinctive anthropology. The reference to the *sinceritate[m]* *naturae* is a reminder of his stance on human nature; he does not hold to the idea of original sin (at least in the sense in which Augustine defines it). However, it should be noted that, if such be the case, he does assert here that the pure human nature may be corrupted.⁷⁹ At this point, as I stated above, the very conciseness of Pelagius's

⁷⁵The similarity of this stance to that of Severian of Gabala should be noted; cf. "The School of Antioch", for Severian's comments on I Cor. 5:5.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸*relinquatis*, although plural, could refer to individual Christians in the aggregate.

⁷⁹However, he would presumably deny that the corruption could be transmitted to offspring; cf. Evans, *Pelagius*, p. 73.

writing makes his meaning uncertain. On the one hand, he has remained close to the strict sense of the Scriptures throughout, which would favour the congregational understanding of *Expurgate uetus fermentum*.... On the other hand, the corruption of the nature of the Church (a concept which Ambrosiaster touches on in his commentary on this passage) does not seem to be the thrust of Pelagius's thought.

His concluding comments on v.8 probably give a clue to his thinking. After drawing the familiar contrast between the type of the Jewish passover and its fulfilment in Christ, he refers to the *fermento malitiae et nequitiae*, saying

quid est enim aliud nisi corruptio naturae fermentum,
quod et ipsum prius a naturali dulcedine recedens
adulterino acore corruptum est?⁸⁰

Here Pelagius reveals himself to be thinking of the individual, personal aspect of cleansing; he interprets the plural verbs as applying to a collection of individuals, each of whom is to cleanse his or her own self. Aside from that, this passage reveals that Pelagius does believe that the "natural sweetness" may be lost; this citation shows Pelagius not to have been as extreme in his doctrinal views as some of his followers⁸¹; he does not at this point mention how the sweetness may be recovered.

In his comments on I Cor. 5:9 and 11, Pelagius shows himself to be firmly in agreement with Paul in regard to the shunning of Christians living in flagrant disobedience; he asserts that Christians should live in such a fashion *ut uestra cohabitatione et doctrina proficiant infideles*. His remark on 5:13 (*Auferte malum a uobis ipsis*) is brief but instructive: *Quo facilius eos possitis docere qui foris sunt*.⁸² His implication is that those who are outside the Christian fellowship are more aware of their need of teaching; if the sinner were allowed to remain in the congregation at Corinth, he might refuse to do penance, since he would not be aware of any need for

⁸⁰*Expositiones*, *op. cit.*

⁸¹Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*, p. 313.

⁸²*Expositiones*, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

it. When excommunicated, however, he would be much more open to receiving the teaching meant to lead him to repentance; this may be the thrust, since Pelagius believes that the sinner can be restored to Christian fellowship; on the other hand, Pelagius may believe that only when the evil man is excommunicated will the Church have the integrity and power to reach outsiders.

D. II CORINTHIANS

Pelagius's comments on this passage reveal his thinking on the question of restoration following penance. In his treatment of II Cor. 2:6 (*Sufficit ei qui eius modi est, obiurgatio haec quae fit a pluribus*), he remarks:

Non de illo solo dicit qui patrum polluit thorum, sed de omni peccante: nam multos illic peccasse epistula prima demonstrat.⁸³

Here Pelagius identifies the penitent man with the offender of I Cor. 5. His belief in forgiveness for all sins is evident in this citation: as this man was to be forgiven, all the other sinners in Corinth could experience it as well. Pelagius's belief is enforced by his comments on v. 7a (*Ita ut e contrario magis donetis et consolemini*):

Ut contra obiurgationem donetis ueniam et consolemini uerbis prophet[i]ae dicentis: "nolo mortem peccatoris[, tantum ut conuertatur et uiuat"]⁸⁴, et "iniquus quacumque die fuerit conuersus, non memorabuntur peccata eius."⁸⁵⁸⁶

In his ensuing remarks on 7b (*Ne forte maiore tristitia absorbeatur qui eius modi est*), he maintains that Paul's meaning is:

Ne forte per desperationem indulgentiae absorbeatur gurgite uitiorum, et a diabolo persuasus ad infidelitatis et blasphemiae maiora praecipitia deducatur.⁸⁷

It has been noted above that Pelagius makes use of Ambrosiaster's writings;⁸⁸ this is perhaps an instance of it. Although Pelagius's vocabulary is different, he views the "being swallowed up by excessive sadness" as a deeper descent into the vices of

⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁸⁴Ezek. 33:11; cf. footnote 75, below.

⁸⁵Ezek. 33:12, 16. Both this and the previous reference are not strict citations of the text.

⁸⁶*Expositiones*, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*

⁸⁸cf. above, p. 19 (Souter).

the world, which may occur if the sinner thinks he is beyond pardon. Another similarity to Ambrosiaster appears in Pelagius's comments on II Cor. 2:10, in which Paul says that he forgives *in facie Christi*, because *uice fungimur Christi*.⁸⁹ In his comments on the same verse, Ambrosiaster states that Paul *legatione [Christi] fungebatur*, words which he also uses in interpreting I Cor. 5:5 (cf. preceding chapter).

Pelagius asserts that extreme hardness toward penitent sinners, so that they perish in their despair, is a case of being deceived by the craftiness (*versutia*) of Satan, and that the entirety of II Corinthians militates against the rigorism of Novatian (whom he calls Novatus).⁹⁰ Since he holds this view of the epistle, it is not therefore surprising to find two other references to I Corinthians 5 in his comments on II Corinthians. In his treatment of II Cor. 7:12 (*Igitur, et si scripsi [uobis], non propter eum qui [in]iuriam fecit, neque propter eum qui [iniuriam] passus est*), Pelagius asserts Paul's meaning is:

Non propter eum qui patri fecit iniuriam tantum, nec propter ipsum solum modo patrem. potest et ita dici: Non propter eum qui excommunicauit, neque propter eum qui eiectus est, scripsi: neque enim per me haec sola emendata uel correctata est causa.⁹¹

Not only does Pelagius identify the offender of II Corinthians with the sinner of I Corinthians 5, but he indicates that the punishment (at least in part) was excommunication/ejection. In his ensuing comments on II Cor. 7:14 (*Quoniam si quid apud illum de uobis [in veritate] gloriatus sum*), Pelagius ties this in with the previous passage, contending that:

Quasi peritus medicus agit, qui uulnus iam prope sanatum blandis unctionibus fouet, ut facilius cauterii us[t]ura sanetur.⁹²

⁸⁹*Expositiones*, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*

⁹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 271-2.

⁹²*Ibid.*, p. 272.

His use of medicinal illustrations for expressing what Paul has done is strongly reminiscent of the Greek writers from Origen onwards and, among the Latin writers, Ambrose (cf. above).

Pelagius's final reference to I Corinthians 5 in his comments on II Corinthians occurs in his treatment of 12:21 of the latter epistle (*Ne iterum, cum uenero, humiliet me deus apud uos e[t] lugeam multos ex his qui ante peccauerunt et non egerunt poenitentiam*, v. 21a). He declares first:

Contra Nouatianos paenitentiae neg[u]atores: si[c] enim
luget paenitentiam non agentes, utique de agentibus
gaudet.⁹³

This reveals his belief in the efficacy of penance. He then continues in his comments on v. 21b (*Super quae gesserunt [et] fornicationem [et] inpuccitiam [quam gesserunt]*):

Inpuccitia grauior est fornicatione, quasi monstruosa
turpitudine, sicut [et] ille fecit, qui uxorem patris
accepit.⁹⁴

While he adds no further commentary here, tying the sinner of I Corinthians 5 to the penitent man of II Corinthians 2, it has already been shown that Pelagius makes this identification

E. COLOSSIANS 2:5

In this passage, the words of Pelagius's text read *Nam et si corpore absen[s]um, sed spiritu uobiscum sum....* He comments:

Habebant hanc gratiam apostoli, ut alibi positi quid alibi
ageretur agnoscerent, sicut Elisaei spiritus cum Giezi
fuit in uia.⁹⁵

⁹³*Ibid.*, p. 302.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 458.

We have already noted Pelagius's use of the story of Elisha and Gehazi (II Kings 5:19-27) in his comments on I Cor. 5:3 (cf. above). His use in this latter context is important because of his statement that all the apostles had this grace.

F. I TIMOTHY 1:20

In referring to the handing over of Hymenaeus and Alexander *ut discant non blasphemare*, Pelagius comments:

"In interitum carnis," ut ex praesenti correptione discant futurum iudicium non negare, ad emendandum sunt traditi, non ad perdendum.⁹⁶

The first item one notices is Pelagius's use of *interitum carnis*, which does not appear in I Tim. 1:20. He is interpreting the latter passage by reference to I Cor. 5:5. The next noteworthy item is his identification of the sin of Hymenaeus and Alexander as being a denial that the judgment is future (II Tim. 2:17). Most important, however, is Pelagius's firm reiteration of his belief that the punishment is remedial (*ad emendandum*) and not for [ultimate] destruction (*non ad perdendum*).

G. REFERENCES OUTSIDE THE *EXPOSITIONES*

The other reference to I Corinthians 5 to be examined occurs in the Pseudo-Augustinian writing *De vita christiana*, the Pelagian authorship of which has been defended in recent years by a variety of scholars;⁹⁷ it is found in Migne both in an appendix to the works of Augustine (*PL* XL, 1031-46) and as the work of Fastidius (*PL* L, 383-402). In 9,2 of this work, the writer is discussing what it means to love God. He notes that the righteous prophet "hates sinners, adulterers and unrighteous

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 479.

⁹⁷Georges de Plinval, "Recherches sur l'œuvre littéraire de Pélage", *Revue de Philologie* LX (1934), pp. 9-42; R.F. Evans, "Pelagius, Fastidius, and the Pseudo-Augustinian *De vita Christiana*", *JTS* 13 (1962), pp. 72-98; R.F. Evans, "Pelagius's Veracity at the Synod of Diospolis", *Studies in Medieval Culture* (ed. by J. Sommerfeld), Kalamazoo, 1964, pp. 21-30; B.R. Rees, *The Letters of Pelagius and his Followers*, pp. 105-6.

men and those who scorn God's commandments..."⁹⁸, following this with the assertion that we are not only not permitted to behave in an evil way ourselves, but that we are not permitted to know those who do. He then states:

Hoc et beatus Apostolus evidenter ostendit, qui
nec panes cum peccatoribus frangi praecepit,
dicens: **Si quis frater cognominatur inter vos
fornicator, aut avarus, aut idolis serviens, aut
maledicus, aut ebriosus, aut rapax, cum
ejusmodi nec cibum sumere**⁹⁹(I Cor. 5:11).

This passage adds little to our understanding of the exegesis of I Cor. 5 by Pelagius. If it is argued that a passage such as this points to the moral perfectibility which was a tenet of Pelagianism, it must be stated in response that all the writers studied in this thesis who have made use of I Cor. 5:11 are in firm agreement with St. Paul at this point.

An overall view of Pelagius's exegesis of I Corinthians 5 impresses the viewer by its strict adherence to the text. Rosenmüller has noted the absence of allegory, "mystic dreams", and useless digressions, in Pelagius's approach to Scripture;¹⁰⁰ this is certainly true of the passages examined in this chapter.

The brevity of Pelagius's comments and the multiplicity of options which he offers for understanding the text occasionally make it difficult to decide what his thinking on a passage is. I have proceeded on the hypothesis that the first option (when he gives several) is the one which he thinks to be probably correct; in support of this is the fact that the first option is usually the one most closely related to a literal exegesis of the text. In the passages where he does not offer an alternate choice, he is very concerned to represent the literal meaning of Paul's statements.

⁹⁸Rees, *The Letters of Pelagius and his Followers*, p. 116.

⁹⁹*PL* XL, 1039.

¹⁰⁰Rosenmüller, *Historia Interpretationis Librorum Sacrorum in Ecclesia Christiana* III (vol. 2), p. 510.

With this in mind, we can state expressly that Pelagius believes that the punishment referred to by Paul in I Cor. 5:5 involves excommunication; his comments on that text imply that he also leaves room for some sort of physical discomfort, which he does not define more precisely, while his second possible interpretation of I Cor. 5:5, referring to the "affliction through penance", is strongly reminiscent of the description of *exomologesis* in writers as early as Tertullian and Origen. Pelagius's writing makes it abundantly clear that he identifies the sinner in I Corinthians 5 with the penitent man in II Corinthians 2. He uses this to demonstrate the availability of full forgiveness for even the most serious sins. Pelagius tells us nothing of the procedure in the church of his day, nor does he say anything as to whether the priests have fully inherited apostolic power. At this point he is reminiscent of Ambrosiaster, who is likewise silent on these points. This silence does not necessarily mean that they do not believe it; their close attention to the text, refusing to be drawn into speculation on items related to it, may explain why neither writer expresses himself at this point. Pelagius definitely writes as a man of the Church, as can be seen from his readiness to address heresies such as Novatianism, and it is unlikely that he holds unacceptable (or unaccepted) views on episcopal powers; the many attacks levelled at him seem never to have called his ecclesiology at this point into question. This is supported by his strong support of the tradition of the Church in regard to penance; he has no desire to challenge that which has been handed down for generations.

The similarities to Ambrosiaster in Pelagius's writings are impressive. A.J. Smith¹⁰¹ has shown the points of contact in the exposition of Romans by both writers. While the scope of this chapter is far too limited to extend Smith's study into a comparison of the same writers' remarks on I Corinthians, what we have seen in the examination of I Corinthians 5 and related passages suggests the same conclusion. It

¹⁰¹*JThS* 19 (1918), pp. 162-230.

is safe to say that Pelagius is familiar with Ambrosiaster's commentary on the Pauline epistles.

The only possible "Pelagian" reference (in the sense which that word has come to bear) occurs in his comments on I Cor. 5:7, in which he indicates his belief in the perfectibility of human nature; but even here he says that its basic purity may be lost. If the writings of Pelagius which we possess were limited to these remarks on the passages examined in this thesis, he would never have been branded as a heretic, but would have been remembered as a sane and cautious expositor of Scripture.

III. AUGUSTINE

When one considers the staggering volume of writing bequeathed to us by Augustine, it is surprising to find that the references to I Cor. 5:3-5 are scarce. He often mentions the penitential procedure of his day, but he does not regularly tie the Corinthian passage in with it (unlike Origen, who regards it as the *locus classicus* of penance leading to restoration; cf. above).

A. VERSES 1-2

The only references to vv. 1-2 in isolation from the succeeding verses occur in *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistola ad Romanos*¹⁰² and *Contra Faustum*. In the first of these¹⁰³, Augustine is treating Rom. 14:4 (*Tu quis es qui iudices alienum servum?*). He discusses the danger of judging the state of a person merely on the basis of what he eats; however,

de illo nefario stupro, ubi uxorem patris sui quidam habuerat, praecipit debere iudicari. Non enim poterat ille dicere, bono animo se tam immane flagitium commisisse.¹⁰⁴

He adds no commentary.

¹⁰²listed by Trapè, *Patrology* IV (p. 379), as *Expositio 84 propositionum ex epistola ad Romanos*.

¹⁰³Brown (*Augustine of Hippo*, p. 76) dates this 395 (Chronological Table B).

¹⁰⁴Chapter 79; *PL* XXXV, 2085-6.

In *Contra Faustum*¹⁰⁵ XXII,64, Augustine is refuting the Manichaeian Faustus's objection about some of the unsavoury episodes in the Old Testament, such as the birth of Zerah from the union of Judah and Tamar (Gen. 38:30). Augustine admits the unpleasantness in the passage and refers to the sexual misconduct of Reuben with Bilhah, his father's concubine (Gen. 35:22), *qualem fornicationem apostolus nec in gentibus dicit auditam*.¹⁰⁶ After this passing reference to I Cor. 5:1, he turns to the story of Tamar (II Sam. 13). His reference to the Corinthian situation in the light of the story concerning Reuben and Bilhah may indicate that Augustine views the relationship between the woman mentioned in I Corinthians 5 and the man's father as one of concubinage rather than full marriage. However, it is not the marital status of the woman which causes the difficulty; it is rather the fact of father and son both being involved with the same woman.

B. VERSES 3-5

Augustine uses this passage in a variety of different contexts, which reflect the various theological struggles with which he is occupied. Due to this, I will examine his usage of the text in the light of the various controversies: Manichean, Donatist, Pelagian, and Arian. The passages which do not fit into any of these categories will be examined afterward.

1. Manichaeism

1. In Chapter 17 of *Contra Adimantum*¹⁰⁷, Augustine is responding to Adimantus's argument that the Old and New Testaments are completely irreconcilable, and especially to his opponent's horror at the slaughters recorded in the Old Testament. Augustine reminds Adimantus that the Manichaeans honor Paul, and he then cites I Cor. 5:3-5. He follows the scriptural citation by asking:

¹⁰⁵Brown (*Augustine of Hippo*, p. 184) dates this 398 (Chronological Table C).

¹⁰⁶CSEL XXV, p. 659.

¹⁰⁷Trapè (*Patrology* IV, p. 381) dates this 392; Brown omits it from his chronological tables.

quid habet enim illa interfectio, quam multum isti exaggerant et inuidiose uentilant, nisi interitum carnis? sed quia exposuit apostolus, quo animo faceret, satis declarauit in aliquem inimicum uindictam cum caritate posse procedere. et tamen hic etiam alio modo fortasse interitus carnis, qui fit per paenitentiam, potest intelligi.¹⁰⁸

He then upbraids the Manichaeans for holding to the apocryphal story of the apostle Thomas, who pronounced a painful death on one who had struck him in the face.

In this passage, it is important to note that Augustine leaves open the option of an actual physical death for the offender; Tertullian, in *De pudicitia*, also holds to this possibility, in his insistence on the impossibility of a seriously fallen Christian being restored. Augustine offers this option in the interests of defending the Old Testament. However, like Pelagius, he gives an alternative: the Corinthian passage may be a reference to penance. His emphasis on the motivating factor of love (*cum caritate*) should be noted; this is always supremely important to Augustine.¹⁰⁹

2. The other passage answering Manichaean objections is found in *De sermone Domini in monte*¹¹⁰, Book I, chapter 20. In the previous chapter, Augustine has treated Matt. 5:39-41, on turning the other cheek, giving up one's cloak as well as one's coat, and going the extra mile. In this context, he asserts that the Church is not thus precluded from inflicting whatever punishment is necessary for redemption, as dictated by compassion; but no one is fit to execute such a punishment except the one who, by the greatness of his love, has overcome the hatred with which we usually are inflamed, desiring to avenge ourselves. He continues by referring to Elijah, who inflicted death on certain offenders (I Kings 18:40; II Kings 1:10), and to James and John, who desired to call down fire on a Samaritan village (Lk. 9:54-5), but were forbidden by the Lord, since their attitude was one of revenge and not of love

¹⁰⁸CSEL XXV, pp. 165-6.

¹⁰⁹cf. Trapè, *Patrology* IV, pp. 455-6.

¹¹⁰Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 76, dates this 394 (Chronological Table B).

(*animaduertens eos non amore correctionem sed odio desiderare uindictam*). As an illustration of his belief that the real enemy is not death but sin when it is left unchecked, he refers to the story of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). He then continues:

Sed si huic libro heretici qui aduersantur ueteri testamento nolunt credere, Paulum apostolum, quem nobiscum legunt, intueantur dicentem de quodam peccatore, quem tradidit satanae in interitum carnis: **Vt anima salua sit.** Et si nolunt hic mortem intellegere—fortasse enim incertum est—, quamlibet uindictam per satanan [*sic*] factam ab apostolo fateantur, quod non eum odio sed amore fecisse manifestat illud adiectum: **Vt anima salua sit.**¹¹¹

As in the previous reference, Augustine suggests that physical death is one possibility of the punishment which was invoked by Paul on the offender at Corinth. Likewise, as in the previous reference, he gives an alternate interpretation of less severity. Although *De sermone Domini in monte* is not an exclusively anti-Manichaean work, we note that Augustine avails himself of the chance to speak against the Manichean rejection of the Old Testament as bloodthirsty; Paul definitely imposed some sort of punishment on the man through the agency of Satan. The context and the nature of the theology of his Manichaean targets strongly suggest some sort of physical discomfort, even if short of death. Both of these citations imply that Augustine is thinking of some bodily difficulty which the offender will undergo; if it is only penance, he would be thinking of the humiliations and discomforts of *exomologesis*; the latter citation probably implies something more than that.

2. Donatism

It is in refuting Donatist teaching that Augustine gives his fullest exposition of the Corinthian text.

¹¹¹CCL XXXV, pp. 70-5.

a) In *Contra epistulam Parmeniani*¹¹², which Trapè lists as "the first major work on the Donatist Controversy"¹¹³, we find a lengthy exegesis of this passage which, with its recommendation of excommunication of the offender and the obscure but frightening *interitum carnis*, would be prime ground for Donatist theology. The *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* notes that, "Theologically, the Donatists were rigorists, holding that the Church of the saints must remain 'holy' ..." ¹¹⁴ Since Augustine treats the whole of I Corinthians 5 in *Contra epistulam Parmeniani*, I will be examining not only his references to vv.3-5, but to the entire chapter.

1) Augustine begins Book III of this work by saying that every measure of ecclesiastical discipline must keep in view the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:2).¹¹⁵ He then proceeds with a blast against the Donatists, who violate this principle by their harsh expulsion of sinners. He asserts that

quae scripturis sanctis salua dilectionis sinceritate et custodita pacis unitate ad corrigenda fraterna uitia mordaciore curatione fieri praecepta sunt, ad sacrilegium schismatis et ad occasionem praecisionis usurpant dicentes: "ecce ait apostolus: **auferte malum a uobis ipsis** [I Cor. 5:13]. quod malum utique si integris," inquiunt, "non obsesset, nec iuberetur auferri".¹¹⁶

Even in this preliminary passage, we see a clue to Augustine's understanding of I Cor. 5:3-5; it is *ad corrigenda uitia*.

2) In III, 1,3, Augustine refers to I Cor. 4:21, in which Paul asks the Corinthians whether he is to come with a rod, or in love and with a spirit of gentleness. Augustine says that the rod is also exercised in love; as proof, he cites I

¹¹²Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 184, dates this 400 (Chronological Table C).

¹¹³Trapè, *op. cit.*, p. 383.

¹¹⁴*The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 415.

¹¹⁵CSEL LI, p. 98.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 98-9.

Cor. 5:1-2, noting that Paul rebukes the Corinthians for not having mourned, not for their lack of anger (the Donatists were all too willing to show anger toward sin, and not mourning). He also asserts that the grief which the Corinthians should have had was due, not to the fact that the man was taken away (irrecoverably expelled), but for the *necessity* that he should have to be taken away (Augustine contrasts *tollebatur* with *tolleretur*)¹¹⁷, adding:

id est ut lugentium dolor ad deum ascenderet et ipse illum qui hoc opus fecit tolleretur de medio eorum, sicut ipse sciret, ne forte illi per humanam imperitiam eradicarent simul et triticum. cum ergo ad talem uindictam necessitas cogit, humilitas lugentium debet impetrare misericordiam, quam repellit superbia saeuientium. nec illius ipsius qui de medio fratrum tollitur debet neglegi salus, sed ita agendum, ut ei talis uindicta sit utilis, et agendum uoto et precibus, si corrigi obiurgationibus non potest. ideoque sequitur et dicit... (There follows a full citation of I Cor. 5:3-5 at this point).¹¹⁸

It should be noted that Augustine does not specify his idea of the particular relationship in which the man and woman stood; he confines himself to the wording of the text. What is most interesting in this passage is the idea that God will enforce the sentence; the congregation is liable to human clumsiness and could make the mistake of weeding out the wheat with the tares. Augustine's emphasis on the remedial character of penance is everywhere evident in this passage, against the Donatist stance that severe offences were beyond forgiveness. The final two lines of the Latin citation above imply that excommunication (to which the text points; Augustine does not deny this) should be used as a last resort.

After the citation of I Cor. 5:3-5 mentioned at the end of the citation immediately above, Augustine continues:

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 100-1.

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 101.

quid ergo agebat apostolus, nisi ut per interitum carnis saluti spiritali consuleret, ut siue aliqua poena uel etiam morte corporali, sicut Annanias [*sic*] et uxor eius ante pedes apostoli Petri ceciderunt, siue per paenitentiam, quoniam Satanae traditus erat, interimeret in se sceleratam carnis concupiscentiam, quia ipse item dicit: **mortificate membra quae sunt super terram**, inter quae etiam fornicationem commemorat, et iterum: **si enim secundum carnem uixeritis, moriemini, si autem spiritu facta carnis mortificaueritis, uiuetis?**¹¹⁹

As in the passages under the heading of "Manichaeism", Augustine leaves open the possibility that Paul is referring to actual physical death, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11); however, he also lists the possibility of a spiritual interpretation, whereby the sinner is understood to deliver the sinful deeds of his body to death. Although Augustine is aware that the case for some sort of literal interpretation is strong¹²⁰, we will see that the spiritual interpretation gives him tremendous ammunition in his battle against Donatism; he emphasises it strongly in the ensuing passages. The main point of the present passage, whatever the punishment might be, is that it is meant to be remedial; it is done with the salvation of the offender's spirit in mind, a point which Donatism would have denied. Thus, in addition to Augustine's emphasis on the remedial power of the punishment, we see that he interprets the spirit which is to be saved as the offender's spirit.

Augustine continues:

non tamen ab eo fraternam separat caritatem, quem de fraterna congregatione praecipit separari. hoc enim apertius ad Thessalonicenses dicit...[there follows a full citation of II Thess. 3:14-15, in which Paul tells the congregation there not to mix with those who will not obey his precepts; nevertheless, they are not to treat them as enemies, but as brothers in need of correction].¹²¹

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 101-2.

¹²⁰Augustine, however, does not think that Paul had the death of the offender in mind; cf. below.

¹²¹*Ibid.*, p. 102.

After accusing the Donatists of violating the apostolic command to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:2), he declares:

ita etiam de isto, qui uxorem patris habuit, luctum potius indicit et pacificam caritatem ubique commendat, sicut et de se ipso ait...[There follow full citations of II Cor. 12:21, in which Paul voices his fear that God may humiliate him when the apostle returns to Corinth and finds his flock not as he would wish, and of II Cor. 13:2, in which Paul warns them that he will not spare them when he comes the next time. He continues:] ideo lugendo iudicabat, ut misericordia dei sine corruptione uinculi pacis, ubi salus tota consistit, contereret peccantes atque corrigeret, sicut de isto ipso qui cum patris uxore fuerat fornicatus fecisse intellegitur. nam non inuenitur de quo alio significet in secunda epistula ad eosdem Corinthios, cum ait...[There follows a full citation of II Cor. 2:4-11, in which Paul urges the restoration of a fallen member, lest he be swallowed up by overabundant grief].¹²²

Augustine presses his point: Paul's way is rebuke followed by restoration, not of final excommunication with no hope of amendment.

Augustine's positive identification of the penitent man of II Cor. 2 with the offender of I Cor. 5 is familiar to us by now, since the writers examined in this thesis have almost unanimously opted for this interpretation (Tertullian being the only exception). This identification makes the forgiveness and restoration even of serious offenders a natural conclusion. Augustine's use of *uxore* in this passage may indicate his belief in a full marriage of the woman with the offender's father, but this cannot be pressed: Augustine sticks close to the text and the main thrust of it, which is the excommunication of the offender.

3) In III, 2,5 of this same work, Augustine develops his argument that the Donatists are guilty of breaking the bond of peace in the Church. He begins by saying that, even if the man mentioned in II Corinthians 2 is not the same as the offender in I

¹²²*Ibid.*, pp. 102-3.

Corinthians 5, Paul's words in II Corinthians 2 nevertheless show how ecclesiastical punishment ought to proceed in love.¹²³ In the ensuing section he cites I Cor. 5:6a (*non bona gloriatio uestra*), but he also notes that several good Latin codices omit the negative *non*; accepting this as a possible reading, he says that the context forbids us to think that Paul was approving the Corinthians' glorying in sin. He then builds an argument that the Corinthian congregation was glorying in its comparative innocence, compared to the world around them, but that their goodness was like that of the Pharisee in the parable (Lk. 18:9-14), who, though not justified, rejoiced in his comparative goodness. Paul warns that such an attitude will corrupt the entire lump of dough (I Cor. 5:6b). Augustine accuses the Donatists of such a self-righteous attitude, citing I Cor. 5:7 (*expurgate uetus fermentum*); he says that this passage shows the Church to be a mixture of good and evil, and that the latter are being exhorted to become like the former, who would know that the Apostle meant them to provide support for those who were still fighting clear of the meshes of sin.¹²⁴

It will be noted that Augustine has now shifted to a spiritualising interpretation of I Cor. 5:7; each Christian is to remove the leaven from his or her own self. I Cor. 5:13 (*auferte malum ex uobis ipsis*) is consequently to be interpreted, "Let each of you remove the evil from yourselves", which would view *malum* as neuter, not masculine. It will be seen below that he maintains this as his favourite interpretation in his response to Parmenian.

4) Later in the same chapter (III, 2, 5) Augustine cites Matt. 9:12 (*non est opus sanis medicus, sed aegrotantibus*) and then refers again to I Cor. 5:7:

**etenim pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus, ut
tantae humilitatis exemplo discerent expurgare uetus
fermentum, id est quidquid in eis superbiae de uetere
homine remansisset.**

¹²³*Ibid.*, p. 104.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 104-6.

He continues with a full citation of I Cor. 5:8 (*diem festum celebremus...*), saying that the celebration must not be for one day, but for all of life. He then says, with reference to his Donatist opponent, that it is malice and wickedness to glory in the sin of another, as though anyone should rejoice in his own righteousness; rather, the attitude of "sincerity and truth" of which the Apostle speaks is to be mindful of our past, even when we are making progress, and to lament for the lapsed ones, since Christ has raised us up from our own lapse.¹²⁵

It is refreshing to find Augustine citing I Cor. 5:7 in context, not merely using it as a typological proof that the Old Covenant has been superseded¹²⁶, or as part of an anti-Jewish polemic¹²⁷. Likewise, his use of context in interpreting the verse is impressive; however, his building of the argument by defending a faulty textual variant weakens the force of his reasoning; Augustine's passionate defence of his position makes him willing to entertain the faulty text, since it suits his argument to do so (cf. below, in his remarks concerning this passage in his *Retractationes*).

5) In III, 2, 6, Augustine continues with a full citation of I Cor. 5:9-13; he asserts that, had Paul attacked pride alone, the Corinthians might have thought that other offences were less sinful. He also notes that a full separation from sinners would not allow the Church to gain converts for Christ. Parmenian has made this passage a basis for part of his attack on the Catholic position; therefore, in III, 2, 7, Augustine remarks that Parmenian objects particularly to fornicators and idolators; the bishop of Hippo then asks him what is his attitude toward the other sins mentioned in the passage (implying that the Donatists are not free of these); does Parmenian not only eat with such as are guilty of them, but also join with them at the Lord's table?¹²⁸

¹²⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 106-7.

¹²⁶as in Jerome, for instance; cf. p. 13 of this chapter.

¹²⁷as, for instance, in Cyril of Alexandria, *PG* LXX, 59-60 (Book I, Oration 1 of his commentary on Isaiah).

¹²⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 107-8.

He then (III, 2, 8-11¹²⁹) turns to the writings of Cyprian, whom the Donatists revere; Augustine shows from his writings that the Church of the third century was not as pure as the Donatists would like to think, and that, consequently, their argument from Cyprian is destroyed. He then accuses the Donatists of separating the tares from the wheat before the harvest, contrary to the dominical command (III, 2, 12¹³⁰), also mentioning in his discussion the Donatist argument, that to mix with offenders violates the Apostle's command in I Cor. 5:11, noting that the Apostle's command was for *impenitent* sinners. In III, 2, 13, Augustine refers to II Thess. 3:15 (*ut non inimicum eum existimetis, sed corripite ut fratrem*), adding, *non enim ad eradicandum fit, sed ad corrigendum*.¹³¹

In III, 2, 14, he turns again to I Cor. 5:11 (*si quis frater nominatur...*), commenting:

in eo quippe quod ait "si quis" nihil aliud uidetur significare uolisse, nisi eum posse tali modo salubriter corrigi qui inter dissimiles peccat, id est inter eos quos peccatorum similium pestilentia non corrumpit. in eo uero quod ait "nominatur" hoc nimirum intellegi uoluit, parum esse ut sit quisque talis, nisi etiam nominetur id est famosus appareat, ut possit omnibus dignissima uideri quae in eum fuerit anathematis prolata sententia. ita enim et salua pace corrigitur et non interfectorie percutitur, sed medicinaliter uritur. propterea et de illo dixit quem tali medicina sanari uolerat: **satis est huic correptio haec quae <a> multis** [II Cor. 2:6]. neque enim potest esse salubris a multis correptio, nisi cum ille corripitur qui non habet sociam multitudinem.¹³²

Here we see Augustine taking a middle course; he heartily disagrees with the harsh rigorism of the Donatists, but neither does he admit their charge of laxity against the Catholics. His stance is that if a person's sin is obvious (*famosus*), and he is

¹²⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 103-13.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 114.

¹³¹*Ibid.*, pp. 114-5.

¹³²*Ibid.*, pp. 115-6.

impenitent, then he must be separated--but even then the separation is not total, since if it were, the person could not receive the rebuke *a multis*; thus, the separation is not total, and even when imposed according to the apostolic dictum, it is remedial in nature, as we see by Augustine's reference to II Cor. 2:6; once again he identifies the penitent man in that passage with the fornicator of I Cor. 5.

Immediately following this passage, he cites Ezek. 9:4, in which those who sigh and groan over the abominations of Jerusalem are spared the wrath of God; Augustine implies that this should be the attitude of Christians toward those who have fallen; the state of things when he is writing precludes the harsh practice of the Donatists, and the behaviour of the faithful should be weeping and lamentation rather than indiscriminate excommunication. After repeating the injunction against rooting up the wheat with the tares, he notes that Paul, after writing the command not to eat bread with such people (I Cor. 5:11), did not repeat it in II Corinthians, but rather appealed to the grief and humiliation he would have if, upon coming to Corinth, he found some of their number not living as they should.¹³³

Augustine concludes this section by appealing to Cyprian; he cites the latter's reference to Ps. 88:31-34 (LXX), in which David is promised an heir to his throne; God tells him that, if his sons disobey, they will be punished but not rejected.¹³⁴ By thus appealing to a bishop revered by the Donatists, but who is citing a stance which they will not accept, Augustine hopes to cut the ground from under their argument.

6) In an important passage (III, 2, 15), Augustine asserts that a man should punish (*corripiat*) what he is able, but when he is unable, then he should bear with the evil patiently by groaning and weeping, until God steps in to do the necessary work of separation of the tares from the wheat. The duty of Christians, Augustine asserts, is to remove evil from themselves; he cites I Cor. 5:13 (*Auferte malum ex uobis ipsis*) as

¹³³*Ibid.*, pp. 116-7.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 117-8.

support¹³⁵. The bishop thinks of the Corinthians as complaining that they are unable to remove offenders from their congregation; Paul responds that, in such a case, Christians should remove the evil from their own selves. It is obvious here that Augustine is interpreting *malum* as neuter rather than masculine; this is a case of a personal, spiritualised interpretation of this text, one highly suited to his argument against the Donatists. However, he adds the following:

quodsi quisquam uelit sic intellegere quod dictums est:
auferte malum ex uobis ipsis, ut per correptionem
 separationis de congregatione fratrum malus quisque
 auferendus sit, studio tamen sanandi, non odio
 perimendi esse faciendum nemo dubitauerit. et quis
 adhibendus sit modus temporaque seruanda, ne pax
 ecclesiae uioletur, in qua maxime tritico parcendum est,
 ne simul cum zizaniis eradicetur, quod in praesentia
 uisum est necessarium disseruimus. haec qui diligenter
 et pacifice cogitat, nec in conseruatione unitatis negligit
 disciplinae seueritatem nec immoderatione coercitionis
 dirrumpit uinculum societatis.¹³⁶

Augustine's honesty is impressive; in spite of his preference for the spiritualising interpretation, since it supports his argument so admirably, he admits that there is another interpretation which involves the excommunication of the sinner; however, even if this be admitted, it is with correction and healing in mind, not utter destruction. He maintains also that neither of these purificatory measures (individual or congregational) violates the bond of peace which exists in the Church, and it does not anticipate the final judgment of the Lord by possibly uprooting the wheat with the tares.

7) In III, 2, 16, Augustine refers once again to I Cor. 5:11; he urges that it be construed in a familial sense. Offenders may be shunned, but it is in order to bring them back to the right path by the sentence of separation, or to keep them from

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 118.

¹³⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 118-9.

corrupting others by their evil behaviour. This is the first time in *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani* that Augustine has cited I Corinthians 5 to show the prophylactic value of the exclusion of the sinner; it is to protect those who have not yet been led astray by the bad conduct of the offender. Still, the punishment is so that the fallen ones may be received once again into the family of God. Augustine admits that it is not always easy to separate the evildoers from the body of Christians, since there is an admixture of wheat and tares at all levels and orders of the Church (he mentions bishops and clerics). Since such is the case, Augustine maintains that good Christians should all regulate the behaviour of others in their own homes so as to obey this injunction of Paul (I Cor. 5:11; *si quis frater nominatur...*), so that the offenders may become like those in their family who are following Christ. Thus, Augustine does see value in the punitive side of Paul's words, but it is precisely because the punishment is remedial that it has value.

This lengthy section of *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani* is crucial for understanding Augustine's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5. He gives no indication whether he views the punishment as involving something physical in addition to excommunication (cf. above: Jerome and Pelagius), but it is patently clear that he strongly adheres to excommunication as necessary. However, it is just as clear that he views it as remedial and restorative; it is something imposed for its salutary results. He is passionately concerned about the breaking of the *uinculum pacis*, and he desires to fulfil Paul's command for discipline without destroying the unity of the Church. His strong leaning toward an individualistic, personal cleansing does not prevent his admission that the congregational application of *expurgate uetus fermentum* and *auferte malum ex uobis ipsis* has great weight.

b) A separate work which is highly relevant to the above discussion is Augustine's *Retractationes*, which he began c. 427¹³⁷. In this work, looking back over

¹³⁷Brown's dating; *Augustine of Hippo* (Chronological Table E), p. 379.

his long literary career, Augustine desires to set some of his errors straight. Trapè has noted that Augustine was "marked by...a sincere humility which did not hesitate to acknowledge his own errors...".¹³⁸ In Book II, chapter 17, Augustine notes that in *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani*, he had previously treated I Cor. 5:13. He states:

In quorum libro tertio, cum dissereretur quomodo sit accipiendum quod ait apostolus: **Auferte malum ex uobis ipsis, illud quod dixi ut ex se ipso quisque auferat malum**, non sic esse intellegendum, sed sic potius ut homo malus auferatur ex hominibus bonis, quod fit per ecclesiasticam disciplinam, satis Greca lingua indicat, ubi sine ambiguitate scriptum est, ut intellegatur hunc malum non hoc malum, quamuis et secundum istum intellectum responderim Parmeniano.¹³⁹

This passage is remarkable for two reasons: first, it demonstrates Augustine's exegetical honesty. As much as he favoured the spiritualising interpretation in the earlier work, he is now willing to admit that it is incorrect. Second, it must be noted that by the time the *Retractationes* were written, Donatism was beaten; the spiritualising interpretation was no longer necessary. It is quite probable that, had Donatism not arisen, Augustine would not have spent the amount of time which he did on the spiritualising interpretation of I Cor. 5:13. We have seen in earlier chapters (cf. Tertullian and Origen for the earliest instances) that the spiritualising interpretation, whereby each Christian is to cleanse himself or herself from evil, was already present, and Augustine would certainly have been aware of it; however, Donatism brought out his strong preference for the spiritualising interpretation. This would be a case of a theologian's exegesis of a passage being shaped (at least in part) by the contemporary situation. However, it has been noted that, even then, Augustine admits that the reading of the text in such a way as to bring about the [temporary] expulsion of a serious offender is legitimate. In his old age, with Donatism beaten,

¹³⁸Trapè, *Patrology* IV, p. 353.

¹³⁹CCL LVII, pp. 103-4.

and with his added knowledge of the Greek text, he admits that this is not only legitimate, but the only accurate reading of the text.

c) In the anti-Donatist writings of Augustine, there is one further reference to I Cor. 5:5. It occurs (in company with I Tim. 1:20, which also uses the *tradidi Satanae* wording) in *Contra litteras Petiliani* II, 10, 24.¹⁴⁰ Addressing Petilian's questions whether the Apostles ever took action against anyone, or whether Christ ever surrendered anyone (no indirect object is supplied in the Latin), Augustine responds:

Possem quidem dicere ipsum satanan [*sic*] omnibus malis hominibus esse peiorem, cui tamen tradidit apostolus hominem **in interitum carnis, ut spiritus saluus sit in die domini Iesu**, itemque alios de quibus dicit: **quos tradidi satanae, ut discant non blasphemare.** et dominus Christus flagellatos expulit de templo improbos mercatores, ubi etiam conexum est testimonium scripturae dicentis: **zelus domus tuae comedit me** [Jn. 2:17]. ecce inuenimus apostolum traditorem, Christum persecutorem. possem ista dicere et te in non paruos aestus mittere, ut non querelas eorum qui patiuntur, sed animum eorum qui faciunt quaerere cogereris.¹⁴¹

He adds, however, that he will not say these things; if the Donatists have suffered anything, it is perhaps from the chaff in the harvest of the Lord. He exhorts them to examine themselves; they will find that they are not as pure as they think. Thus, the reason for their schism will be destroyed.

In this passage, we note some of Augustine's characteristic themes: by the reference to chaff (*palea*), we are reminded of his great emphasis in *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani* on not pulling up the tares with the wheat; this language is in the same category. Likewise, his examination of the motivation for excommunication is reminiscent of his writing in the earlier work. While he does not deny the behaviour of Christ and the Apostles, he changes the emphasis, which he believes to be

¹⁴⁰Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 184, dates this 405 (Chronological Table C).

¹⁴¹CSEL LII, pp. 33-4.

temporary and restorative. Thus, while accepting the texts which Petilian uses for his argument, Augustine completely changes its thrust. As to contributing to our understanding of Augustine's exegesis of the Corinthian text, this passage offers little, although it reinforces Augustine's belief that punishment must be performed with love.

3. Pelagianism

Augustine's references to I Cor. 5:3-5 in his anti-Pelagian writings occur in two works, *Contra Iulianum* and *Contra Iulianum (Opus Imperfectum)*.

a) In Book III, chapter 7, of the former work, Augustine is countering Julian's argument that there is nothing wrong with sexual intercourse *per se*. Augustine has asserted that the activity itself is not evil, but that it cannot help but be accompanied by evil (i.e., lust). Julian has maintained that adultery is the corruption of something basically good; Augustine counters:

...si vel sero sapis, non potes nisi negare: quia non utique si mala est commixtio adulterorum, propterea ex illis nascentium conditio deformis est hominum. Illa quippe est hominum male operantium de membris bonis: ista vero Dei est bene operantis de hominibus malis. Quod si dixeris, Etiam cum fit adulterium, bona est per se ipsa commixtio, quia naturalis est, sed ea male utuntur adulteri; cur non vis acquiescere, ita posse esse libidinem malam, qua tamen bene utantur gignendi gratia conjugati? An potest bonorum esse usus malus, et non potest malorum bonus? cum inveniamus ipso satana quam bene usus fuerit Apostolus, tradens ei hominem **in interitum carnis ut spiritus salvus esset in die Domini** [I Cor. 5:5], et alios **ut discerent non blasphemare** [I Tim. 1:20].¹⁴²

Augustine's citation of the verses from I Corinthians 5 and I Timothy 1 in such a context is vastly different from what we have observed in *Contra epistulam Parmeniani*, but the sentiments are similar. In both cases, he urges that good may

¹⁴²PL XLIV, 710.

come from evil. In the latter case, the evil is the punishment meted out to the offender; the good is his reclamation and restoration to the Church. In the case of sexual intercourse in marriage, Augustine insists that the lust accompanying it is evil, even though God may overrule it in the production of children. Aside from illustrating Augustine's ideas about good coming from something evil through the overruling providence of God, we learn little about his exegesis of the passage.

b) In Book V, chapter 3, Augustine is challenging Julian's statement that our fleshly disobedience must be good, since it is a result of the penalty of divine justice given at the Fall. Augustine says that Julian might as well praise the evil angels and Satan their prince, because he also was an avenger of sin when the Apostle gave him one man for the destruction of the flesh.¹⁴³ Although brief, this reference is reminiscent of other writers in this thesis (Origen, John Chrysostom, Theodoret, Ambrose, and Jerome), who have discussed how Satan [inadvertently] discharges the will of God in his punishment of offenders.

c) In Book III of *Contra Iulianum* (*Opus Imperfectum*), Julian is protesting the idea that God is the creator of evil (Section 128) and that he punishes the innocent (Section 129); Augustine responds that they are innocent neither by origin nor on account of what God does (*nec propter quod facit deus*). Julian (Section 130) continues his protest: *Et a diabolo possidentur, quia hoc facit deus*. Augustine's response is, *Et apostolus tradidit hominem satanae, sed iustitia, non malitia, et deus tradidit quosdam in reprobum sensum, atque utinam non ibi essetis et vos*. The highlighted passage is a reference to Rom. 1:28 (*tradidit illos Deus in reprobum sensum...*), but the passage immediately preceding it is evidently an allusion to I Cor. 5:5. Augustine is countering Julian's argument by insisting that the man so delivered

¹⁴³*Ibid.*, 786.

fully deserved it. This passage adds little to our understanding of Augustine's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5.¹⁴⁴

4. Arianism

Augustine's only reference to I Cor. 5:4 in isolation from the rest of the text occurs in the only work relevant to this chapter in which Augustine deals with Arian objections to orthodox doctrine. In the *Collatio cum Maximino Arianorum Episcopo*, a late work which Brown¹⁴⁵ dates 428, Augustine is contending for the full deity of Christ. He cites the Corinthian passage (*Congregatis vobis et meo spiritu, cum virtute Domini Jesu*) in his argument that the Son is the begotten power of God; his presence with the Corinthian congregation is a proof of his deity.¹⁴⁶ This passage reveals little of Augustine's understanding of the Corinthian passage as a whole.

5. Exegetical and expository works

The citations in this portion of the thesis do not have a particular polemic bias; they occur more in Augustine's expositions of Scripture, or in works relating to the life of the Church when the spectre of heresy is only in the background.

a) The first reference to be examined occurs in Augustine's *Expositio 84 propositionum ex epistola ad Romanos*¹⁴⁷. In *Propositio 52*, which treats Rom. 8:15-6, Augustine asserts that the *spiritus in timorem* refers to the Old Covenant, while the *spiritus adoptionis filiorum* pertains to the New. Augustine affirms that the law is good, but that the spirit of servitude is not; it is tied in with the fear of death. It has no power over the Christian,

nisi qui ei per ordinem divinae providentiae traditus fuerit, Dei justitia sua cuique tribuente. Quam potestatem acceperat Apostolus, cum dicit de

¹⁴⁴CSEL XXXVI/1, p. 442.

¹⁴⁵Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, p. 379 (Chronological Table E).

¹⁴⁶PL XLII, 729.

¹⁴⁷dating from 395, according to Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 76 (Chronological Table B).

quibusdam, **Quos tradidit satanae ut discant non blasphemare:** et iterum de alio, **Jam judicavi,** inquit, **tradere hujusmodi satanae in interitum carnis, ut anima salva fit.**¹⁴⁸

This reveals Augustine's belief in the apostolic power, but it reveals little else concerning Augustine's exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5.

b) In his commentary on Galatians, dating from the same period as the *Expositio 84 propositionum ex epistola ad Romanos*¹⁴⁹, Augustine is treating Gal. 4:7-8, which discusses the status of a son before he comes of age. He maintains that the Galatians, before their conversion to Christianity, were serving gods who were really not gods; however, the elements of this world (*procuratores vel actores*) must serve the divine providence, whether they want to or not. He then asserts:

Nam si etiam ipsi praevaricatores angeli, cum principe suo diabolo, non recte dicerentur procuratores vel actores divinae providentiae, non Dominus magistratum hujus mundi diabolum diceret; nec uteretur illo ad correptionem hominem ipsa potestas apostolica, eodem Paulo alibi dicente, **Quos tradidi satanae, ut discant non blasphemare:** et in alio loco ad salutem; ait enim, **Ego quidem sicut absens corpore, praesens autem spiritu, jam judicavi quasi praesens, eum qui sic operatus est, in nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi congregatis vobis et meo spiritu, cum potentia Domini nostri Jesu Christi, tradere hujusmodi satanae in interitum carnis, ut spiritus salvus in die Domini Jesu.**¹⁵⁰

Augustine continues by saying that the magistrates operate only under the power of the emperor; likewise, the deputies and agents (evil angels in this case) can operate only within the permission of God.

This passage is important because it shows a similarity in thought to John Chrysostom and Theodoret, both of whom refer to Satan as the δῆμιος (cf. above,

¹⁴⁸PL XXXV, 2074.

¹⁴⁹Brown, *op. cit.*

¹⁵⁰PL XXXV, 2128-9.

Chrysostom's *De diabolo tentatore* and Theodoret's treatment of I Cor. 5:4-5 in his commentary on the Pauline epistles). Origen refers to it at least once (*Contra Celsum* VIII:70), but the Antiochenes make greater use of it. Among the Latin writers examined in this thesis, Ambrose and Jerome have both made use of the concept of Satan as the one who has to operate under higher orders, even adversely. There is no question of verbal dependence here; the thought is similar, but the wording is entirely Augustine's own. In this passage, his statement that what Paul did was *ad salutem* in reference to I Cor. 5:5 should be noted, as should his words *ad correptionem* in reference to I Tim. 1:20. Here we see the two thrusts of the penitential procedure. Even at this early stage of his Christian literary career, he is already assuming the stance which characterises his later work. It is firmly in accord with the tradition of the Church, both Eastern and Western; knowing of the heavy influence of Ambrose in his life, we can say that Augustine's ideas on penance were probably influenced by the Milanese bishop.

c) There are two references to the Corinthian text in the much later work, *De fide et operibus*¹⁵¹, which Augustine has written to show that genuine faith must be accompanied by works.

1) In II, 3, Augustine is concerned to prove from Scripture that Paul did not allow Christians to lead evil lives. Looking back to the Old Testament, he refers to Phineas, who killed two adulterers with the sword (Num. 25:5ff.); he then adds the important words, *quod utique degradationibus et excommunicationibus significatum est esse faciendum hoc tempore, cum in ecclesiae disciplina uisibilis fuerat gladius cessaturus*.¹⁵² This shows his belief that the penitential system under the New Covenant has replaced capital punishment under the Old; the death penalty is a type of penance. Augustine continues:

¹⁵¹Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 282, dates this 413 (Chronological Table D).

¹⁵²CSEL XLI, p. 37.

nec quia beatus apostolus inter falsos fratres tolerantissime congemescit et quosdam etiam diabolicis inuidientiae stimulis agitados Christum tamen praedicare permittit, ideo parcendum censet illi, qui uxorem patris sui habuit--quem praecipit congregata ecclesia tradendum satanae in interitum carnis, ut spiritus saluus sit in die domini Iesu--aut ideo ipse alio non tradidit satanae, ut discerent non blasphemare, aut frustra dicit: [there follows a full citation of I Cor. 5:9-13. At its conclusion, referring to 5:13 (**Auferte malum ex uobis ipsis**), he adds:] ubi quidem aliqui id, quod dictum est "ex uobis ipsis", ita intellegunt, ut ex se ipso unusquisque auferat malum, hoc est, ut ipse sit bonus. sed utrolibet modo intellegatur, siue ut seueritate ecclesiae mali excommunicationibus corripiantur, siue ut se quisque corripiendo et corrigendo a se ipso auferat malum, illud tamen, quod supra dictum est, non habet ambiguitatem, ubi praecipit non commisceri eis fratribus, qui in aliquo supra dicto uitio nominantur, id est noti famosique sunt.¹⁵³

We see Augustine offering two ways of interpretation here: either the personal, spiritual cleansing which is the responsibility of every Christian, or the expulsion of an offender from the congregation. We have already encountered these options in his writings, particularly in his anti-Donatist writings. He also echoes these writings by saying that the ones who must be avoided, according to I Cor. 5:9-13, are those whose behaviour is known (proven) to be licentious (cf. p. 39).

Augustine continues (III):

Quo autem animo et qua caritate misericors ista seueritas adhibenda sit, non solum eo loco, ubi ait: **ut spiritus saluus sit in die domini Iesu**, sed alibi quoque euidenter ostendit dicens: **si quis non obaudit uerbo nostro per epistulam, hunc notate, et nolite commisceri cum eo, ut erubescat; et non ut inimicum existimetis, sed corripite ut fratrem** [II Thess. 3:14-5].¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³*Ibid.*, pp. 37-8.

¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

His emphasis on the spirit of the punishment should be noted; although he is no longer fighting a major war with the Donatists, he still retains the attitude which he endeavoured to hammer home in his earlier writings. The severity of discipline must be done in mercy, not in harshness. It is to bring a sinner to his senses, and it is restorative in nature. Peter Brown has described Augustine's view of correction by the Church as, "...an essentially active process of corrective punishment, a 'softening-up process,' a 'teaching by inconveniences'---a *per molestias eruditio*."¹⁵⁵ The same writer has also noted Augustine's struggle, even in his early works as a priest, to define the boundary between severity (in discipline) and aggression.¹⁵⁶

2) In chapter XXVI, 48, of the same work, Augustine is attacking the argument that baptism renders subsequent obedience unnecessary, since it is the sacrament which admits one to Heaven. After insisting on the necessity of a righteous life for the believer, he asserts:

non quia quisquam ita debet extolli, ut, non dicam apud alios iactare, sed apud se ipsum putare audeat se in hac uita esse sine peccato, sed nisi essent quaedam ita grauia, ut etiam excommunicatione plectenda sint, non diceret apostolus: **congregatis uobis et meo spiritu tradere huius modi [sic] satanae in interitum carnis, ut spiritus saluus sit in die domini Iesu.** unde etiam dicit: **ne lugeam multos, qui ante peccauerunt et non egerunt paenitentiam super inmunditiam et fornicationem quam gesserunt** [II Cor. 12:21]. item nisi essent quaedam non ea humilitate paenitentiae sananda, qualis in ecclesia datur eis, qui proprie paenitentes uocantur, sed quibusdam correptionum medicamentis, non diceret ipse dominus: **corripe eum inter te et ipsum...**[Matt. 18:15].¹⁵⁷

This passage is in marked contrast to *Contra epistulam Parmeniani*; there, Augustine has shown himself to be very willing to adopt the spiritualising

¹⁵⁵Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

¹⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 209.

¹⁵⁷*CSEL* XLI, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

interpretation of I Corinthians 5 which calls on all Christians to purge out the evil in their own lives; here, he gives absolutely no hint of such an interpretation (although he has mentioned it earlier in this same work; cf. the preceding citation). Rather, Paul means that excommunication is at times necessary for flagrant offenders. However, even then it is to be remedial; Augustine's references to the *humilitate paenitentiae sananda* and *quibusdam correptionum medicamentis* should be noted. Augustine thus holds to the tradition of the Church, both Western and Eastern, in seeing penance as remedial and medicinal. The comparison of this passage with *Contra epistulam Parmeniani* provides a fascinating study of how a current crisis may condition a writer's exegesis; however, Augustine's exegetical honesty must also be praised, since he is well aware, even in the heat of the Donatist controversy, that the argument for interpreting I Corinthians 5 in the context of congregational discipline is very strong.

6. Letters

In *Epistle XCIII*, Augustine refers both to I Corinthians 5:5 and I Tim. 1:20. After mentioning Paul's imprisonments in Philippi and Jerusalem [Acts 16:22-4; 21:33-4], he states:

...sed quolibet custode carceris peior est utique satanas, cui tamen ipse Paulus tradidit **hominem in interitum carnis, ut spiritus saluus sit in die domini Iesu.** et hic quid dicimus? ecce mitiori tradidit crudelis traditor, crudeliori tradidit misericors traditor. discamus, fratres, in similitudine operum discernere animos operantium ne clausis oculis calumniemur et beniuolos pro nocentibus accusemus. item cum ait idem apostolus tradidisse se quosdam **satanae, ut discerent non blasphemare,** malum pro malo reddidit, an potius malos etiam per malum emendare bonum opus esse iudicauit?¹⁵⁸

This passage contains several important ideas. First is Augustine's comparison of Satan to a gaoler; this is strongly reminiscent of the concept already noted in the

¹⁵⁸CSEL XXXIV, p. 452.

Greek writers commenting on I Cor. 5:5, from Origen (*Contra Celsum* VIII, 70) to John Chrysostom (*De diabolo tentatore*) and Theodoret (cf. his comments on I Cor. 5 in his commentary on the Pauline epistles), as well as in Latin writers such as Jerome (cf. above, p. 6). Second, Augustine's contrast of Paul as prisoner and Paul as the one enforcing discipline is vivid; his subsequent words, *discamus...in similitudine operum discernere animos operantium...* are reminiscent of his anti-Donatist writings, in which he emphasises strongly that discipline must be administered in love. Here, he indicates that, although Paul surrendered offenders to the more severe gaoler, his motivation was love, and the goal of the punishment was the amendment of the offender (*an potius malos etiam per malum emendare bonum opus esse iudicavit*).

7. Other writings

Augustine's only other reference to I Cor. 5:3-5 occurs in his *Speculum de scriptura sacra*, which Trapè dates c. 427¹⁵⁹. It is a collection of moral precepts from both Old and New Testaments, and the citation of I Corinthians 5 is merely a full rendering of the text, with no commentary attached.¹⁶⁰ Its authenticity has been questioned¹⁶¹.

C. THE REMAINDER OF I CORINTHIANS 5

1. **Verse 6:** One reference to this verse occurs in Book I, chapter 24, of Augustine's early work, *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum*.¹⁶² Referring to the virtue of prudence, Augustine, in a *catena* of scriptural quotations concerning watchfulness, cites Paul's words, *Nescitis quia modicum fermentum totam massam corrumpit?* He attaches no further commentary. However, another reference to this verse in *Epistle CCXI* is more important;

¹⁵⁹Trapè, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

¹⁶⁰*PL* XXXIV, 1000-1.

¹⁶¹e.g., by B. Capelle, *Révue des Études Augustiniennes* II (1956), pp. 423-33; G. de Plinval, *Révue des Études Augustiniennes* III (1957), pp. 393-402.

¹⁶²Trapè (*op. cit.*, p. 381) dates this 388; Brown (*op. cit.*, p. 74), dates it 390 (Chronological Table B).

Augustine is rebuking the nuns in the convent where his sister was formerly prioress for their unruly behaviour; they have expressed dissatisfaction with her successor. Augustine says:

modicum fermenti...nolo dicere, quod sequitur: hoc enim magis cupio, et oro et hortor, ut ipsum fermentum reuertatur in melius, non tota massa, sicut paene iam fecerat, conuertatur in peius.¹⁶³

In his reference to *modicum fermenti*, Augustine is probably thinking of Paul's use of the same words in Gal. 5:9, since prior to the citation above, he cites Gal. 5:7-8; however, it reveals thinking related to what we have already observed in *Contra epistulam Parmeniani*; each of the nuns is to uproot the censorious spirit from herself before the problem becomes any worse. Although this applies to the entire community, the basic thrust of this passage is personal in its application; the evil which must be excised is that which has been allowed entrance to the lives of the sisters, individually; it is not in reference to an evil person who must be suspended from the life of the worshipping community. It should be noted, however, that Augustine is applying this verse in a conventual/monastic setting, although there is nothing in his words to the nuns which he would not have said to a non-monastic community, unlike the writings of, e.g., Basil (cf. above, in particular the citations from the monastic *Regulae*).

2. **Verse 7:** Augustine uses this verse in various ways. At times he cites it typologically, showing that Christ and Christianity are the fulfilment of the Old Testament (*De doctrina christiana* II, 41;¹⁶⁴ *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, homily on Ps. 39 [LXX]¹⁶⁵, which also includes a citation of I Cor. 5:8, as an application of the fulfilment in Christ; *In Iohannis Euangelium Tractatus CXXIV*, homilies 55¹⁶⁶, 117¹⁶⁷,

¹⁶³CSEL LVII, p. 358.

¹⁶⁴Œuvres de Saint Augustin XI; *Le Magistère Chrétien*, p. 332.

¹⁶⁵CCL XXXVIII, p. 435.

¹⁶⁶CCL XXXVI, p. 464.

and 120¹⁶⁸); at other times, he refers to it in the context of personal, individual cleansing (*Confessiones* VIII, 1¹⁶⁹; XIII, 19¹⁷⁰, an allusion to both I Cor. 5:7 and 5:8; *Epistle LV*¹⁷¹). These latter references have some similarity to his anti-Donatist writings, but there seems to be no direct linkage. We are given no more information concerning his exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5.

Verse 8: Augustine's only other reference to I Cor. 5:8 occurs in Book IV, chapter 21, of *De doctrina christiana*¹⁷²; it is a citation from Cyprian's *Tractatus de disciplina et habitu virginum*. Augustine attaches no commentary to the scriptural citation.

Verse 9: The only additional references to this verse are part of lengthier references to vv. 11-2; they occur in *Sermo CCCLI*, which is of dubious authenticity. CPL¹⁷³ is undecided concerning it, although Bernhard Poschmann¹⁷⁴ asserts that there is nothing in the sermon which would count against the Augustinian authorship. In the passages under discussion, the writer says 1) that evil ones should definitely be removed from the Church; if this is not possible, they should be borne with (*tolerentur*), rather than become the occasion for a schism;¹⁷⁵ later in the same work, he asserts that, when Paul says, *Si quis frater nominatur...*, he means that the offender should be accused and convicted by the law of God, not by an arbitrary judgment.¹⁷⁶

¹⁶⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 651-2.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p. 662.

¹⁶⁹*CCL XXVII*, p. 113.

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 255.

¹⁷¹*CSEL XXXIV*, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

¹⁷²*Œuvres de Saint Augustine*, *op. cit.*, p. 514.

¹⁷³p. 75.

¹⁷⁴in *Revue Benedictine* XIII (1934), pp. 18-35.

¹⁷⁵*PL XXXIX*, 1546.

¹⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 1547.

These passages are reminiscent of Augustine's stance in his writings against the Donatists. The first is similar to *Contra epistulam Parmeniani* III, 2, 15, in which the bishop of Hippo discusses what one should do if correction/excommunication is impossible; the latter passage is akin to *Contra epistulam Parmeniani* III, 2, 14, in which Augustine states that excommunication should be imposed only when the sin has been proven. On the basis of these two passages, Poschmann's cautious approval (or at least, a refusal to deny the genuineness) seems acceptable.

Verse 11: There are only three references to this verse in isolation from other parts of I Corinthians 5; the first two address the same problem. In *Epistle XXII*, Augustine is objecting to the drunken revels at the tombs of the martyrs. He cites I Cor. 5:11, noting that the Apostle forbids us even to eat with those who do such things.¹⁷⁷ He says that, due to public leniency toward drunkenness, it may be necessary to take the body of Christ in communion with those with whom we are forbidden to eat even the bread which sustains our bodies. He pleads, however, that such inebriated behaviour be kept away from the tombs of the martyrs and the houses of prayer. The other reference occurs in *Epistle XXIX*. The problem, again, is drunkenness. Augustine cites I Cor. 5:11, also sadly noting Paul's words in I Cor. 6:9-11, that those who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.¹⁷⁸

In these passages we are given a picture of the less savoury side of the church in Augustine's day. We are also reminded here, as in other passages (e.g., *Contra epistulam Parmeniani* III, 2, 15), that there are occasions when discipline is in order, but the church leaders are powerless to impose it (in this case, because of public leniency toward drunkenness).

¹⁷⁷CSEL XXXIV, p. 57.

¹⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p. 116.

The third reference occurs in Augustine's anti-Donatist work, *De baptismo*¹⁷⁹, Book VII, chapter 45, he responds to a Donatist attack citing II John 10-11, in which Christians are warned against accepting a false teacher into their houses, or giving them a Christian greeting. The bishop of Hippo responds that Paul forbade the Corinthians to mix with any professing Christian who was covetous or a drunkard (I Cor. 5:11), but then adds:

et tamen cum collegis faeneratoribus insidiosis
fraudatoribus raptoribus non priuatam mensam, sed dei
altare habebat commune Cyprianus.¹⁸⁰

We have noted in our examination of the relevant passages in *Contra epistulam Parmeniani*¹⁸¹ that Augustine on other occasions has cited Cyprian to his Donatist opponents; he insists that the Carthaginian bishop was not as harsh to offenders as they would like to think.

Verse 12: although Paul's words in this verse are not usually cited in the exegetical passages of those writing on I Corinthians 5, Augustine has one relevant word for us; he asserts that the words, *Nonne de his qui intus sunt uos iudicatis?* are a proof that the Church Militant still needs to exercise its power of judgment.¹⁸²

Verses 12-13: There are two references to this passage, in different works:

1) In the *Quaestiones in Heptateuchem* (Book V), Augustine is treating Deut. 24:7, which concerns the mandatory death sentence to kidnappers. He notes that the Scriptures assiduously demand that evil ones be killed. He then cites I Cor. 5:12-13, noting that the Greek in the original refers to an evil *man*, not evil *per se* (*Nec ait, τὸ πονηρόν, id est, hoc malignum; sed τὸν πονηρόν, quod est, hunc malignum*). He then continues:

¹⁷⁹Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 184, dates this 401 (Chronological Table C).

¹⁸⁰CSEL LI, *op. cit.*, p. 366.

¹⁸¹e.g., III, 2, 7-8; cf. above.

¹⁸²*De civitate Dei*; CSEL XL, p. 451.

Ex quo apparet eum voluisse intelligi, qui aliquid tale commisit, ut excommunicatione sit dignus. Hoc enim nunc agit in Ecclesia excommunicatio, quod agebat tunc interfectio. Quamvis et aliter illud apostolicum possit intelligi, ut unusquisque malum vel malignum ex se ipso sit jussus auferre. Qui sensus acceptabilior esset, si hoc malum, vel hoc malignum, non autem hunc malignum in graeco inveniretur; nunc vero credibilis est de homine dictum, quam de vitio. Quanquam possit eleganter intelligi etiam homo auferre a se malum hominem, quemadmodum dictum est, **Exuite vos veterem hominem**; quod exponens ait, **Qui furabatur, jam non furetur** [Eph. 4:22, 28].¹⁸³

Here we once again see Augustine divided between two interpretations. He sees the value of the personal, individual cleansing, but he must admit that the original Greek wording does not support this. His exegetical honesty is refreshing; we have already seen it on this same issue in *Contra epistolam Parmeniani*, and particularly in *Retractationes* (cf. above), in which he admits that the spiritualised, individual interpretation is not borne out by the original. Since the *Quaestiones in Heptateuchem* are comparatively late in Augustine's career¹⁸⁴, it should be noted that Augustine came to this awareness of the meaning of the Greek original when he was entering old age; the *Retractationes* are even later (cf. footnote 135). We note here, too, his statement that excommunication is the replacement in Christian times for the Old Testament death penalty, which we have already noticed in *De fide et operibus* II, 3 (cf. above, p. 48).

2) The other reference to vv. 12-13 occurs in *Epistle XCV*. Augustine is discussing the whole question of rigorous penance. He describes his dilemma of knowing when to be stern and when to be lenient by citing and contrasting various passages of Scripture which alternately recommend private exhortation and public

¹⁸³PL XXXIV, 764.

¹⁸⁴Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 284, dates it 419 (Chronological Table D).

rebuke. He cites I Cor. 5:12-3 to show that judgment of evildoers is necessary, but he adds:

quod cum etiam faciendum uidetur, quatenus fiat, quantae curae ac timoris est, ne forte contingat, quod de illo ipso intellegitur in secunda ad eosdem epistula cauendum admonere, **ne maiore tristitia absorbeatur, qui eius modi est** [II Cor. 2:7]! et ne quisquam hoc non multum curandum putaret, ibi ait: **Ut non possideamur a satana; non enim ignoramus mentes eius** [II Cor. 2:11].¹⁸⁵

Augustine's reference to *de illo ipso* in reference to II Cor. 2:7 and 11 reminds us that he identifies the offender of I Corinthians 5 with the penitent man of II Corinthians 2.

D. I TIMOTHY 1:20

In addition to the passages already examined, there are four references in Augustine's writings to I Tim. 1:20, which also uses the *tradidi Satanae* wording.

1. The earliest occurs in Book II, chapter 28 of *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*¹⁸⁶. Augustine is concluding his arguments against the Manichaean rejection of the Old Testament. Responding to the question of who created the devil, Augustine answers that the devil made himself [the devil]. The Manichaeans then ask why God created him at all, if God knew that this creature would sin. Augustine responds that the devil has his uses:

An forte non audistis apostolum Paulum dicentem, **Quos tradidi Satanae, ut discant non blasphemare?** et de seipso dicit, **Et ne magnitudine revelationum extollar, datus est mihi stimulus carnis, angelus Satanae qui me colaphizet** (II Cor. 12:7).¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁵CSEL XXXIV, *op. cit.*, pp. 508-9.

¹⁸⁶Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 74, dates this 389 (Chronological Table B).

¹⁸⁷PL XXXIV, 218-9.

Augustine's Manichaean opponents respond that the devil, then, is good. Augustine's response is that the devil is very evil, but that God Almighty is good, who from the devil's malice brings many just and righteous things to pass.

This passage is strongly reminiscent of the works of John Chrysostom, who often speaks of Satan as the δῆμιος, who does the will of God even when he does not want to.¹⁸⁸ We have also seen this emphasis in the works of Origen¹⁸⁹ and Theodoret¹⁹⁰ among the Greek writers, as well as in the works of Ambrose¹⁹¹. Although Augustine does not add further comments on I Tim. 1:20 here, his remark that God brings many good and righteous things out of the work of the devil may indicate his belief in the power and purpose of penance.

2. In Book XXII, chapter 20, of *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*¹⁹², Faustus has objected to the Old Testament idea that the judgment of God falls on both the just and the unjust. Augustine counters that no human is so righteous as to be beyond the need of further pruning (using the language of Jn. 15:1ff). He affirms that even Paul was subjected to buffeting by an angel of Satan (II Cor. 12:7); this must have been God's doing, since Satan would not want to spare Paul from pride. He continues:

quis hoc dixerit? ab illo igitur traditus erat iustus colaphizandus angelo satanae, qui per eum tradebat et iniustos ipsi satanae; de quibus idem dicit: **quos tradidi satanae, ut discant non blasphemare.** iamne intellegitis, quomodo ille desuper non parcat nec iusto nec peccatori?¹⁹³

Although Augustine's contrast of the righteous one who suffers at Satan's hands with the unrighteous ones who were surrendered to Satan by the righteous one is a

¹⁸⁸cf. *De diabolo tentatore*, above; also his *Homily XV* on I Corinthians.

¹⁸⁹*Contra Celsum* VII:70.

¹⁹⁰cf. his remarks on I Cor. 5 in his commentary on the Pauline epistles.

¹⁹¹cf. above, *De paenitentia*.

¹⁹²Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 184, dates this 398 (Chronological Table C).

¹⁹³*CSEL* XXV, *op. cit.*, pp. 608-9.

fascinating instance of the way in which the author's mind works, this passage adds little to our knowledge of his exegesis of the *tradidi Satanae* wording.

3. Chapter 28 of *De natura et gratia*¹⁹⁴ contains a reference to I Tim. 1:20. In the preceding chapter, Augustine has been discussing how God makes use of the evils which befall us in this life. He affirms that divine grace is absolutely necessary for the performance of any good work; he then speaks of the danger of spiritual pride, referring to Paul's "messenger of Satan" given to the Apostle after his great visionary experience (II Cor. 12:1-10). Augustine concludes this chapter by stating:

Ideo qui in voluntate sua praestiterat decori ejus
virtutem, avertit paululum faciem suam, ut qui hoc
dixerat fieret conturbatus: quoniam ipsis est ille tumor
sanandus doloribus.¹⁹⁵

In chapter 28, he gives his opinion that

Deserit aliquantum Deus, unde superbis, ut scias non
tuum, sed ejus esse, et discas superbus non esse.¹⁹⁶

He maintains that Satan is the author of sin, and yet God uses him to extinguish sin, as in the case of those who *traduntur satanae, ut discant non blasphemare*. He notes that fires sometimes quench other fire, and some poisons counter the effects of others.¹⁹⁷

This passage once again highlights the remedial character of penance; what Satan does works out to the ultimate advantage of Christians who are undergoing his pummeling (*colaphizare*).

4. The final passage to be examined comes from *Contra mendacium*¹⁹⁸, in chapter V, 8. Here Augustine is attacking the Priscillianists, who insist that they are

¹⁹⁴Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 282, dates this 415 (Chronological Table D).

¹⁹⁵*PL* XLIV, 262.

¹⁹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 284, dates this 420 (Chronological Table D).

still Catholic in spite of some questionable items of belief. Augustine is maintaining that converts made by lying are not to be trusted, and that Catholics should not use lies in order to win over heretics to their position. He continues:

et cum apostolus homines tradiderit etiam ipsi **satanae, ut discerent non blasphemare**, nos conamur homines eruere satanae, ut discant non per ignorantiam, sed per scientiam blasphemare, nobisque ipsis, magistris eorum, hoc tam magnum inportamus exitium, ut propter haereticos capiendos prius efficiamur, quod certum est, dei blasphematores, quo possimus propter eos, quod incertum est.¹⁹⁹

Although Augustine's remarks highlight an interesting problem, I Tim. 1:20 is used only in passing; we learn nothing additional about his understanding of what *tradere Satanae* means.

E. CONCLUSION

In Augustine's treatment of I Cor. 5:3-5 and I Tim. 1:20, it is overwhelmingly clear that he views the punishment meted out as a temporary punishment, designed to bring an offender back to the path of obedience; this is in keeping with his emphasis on *caritas*, either in the character of God or in the life of the Church. Love does not expel with no hope of restoration; rather, love inflicts whatever punishment is needed in order to regain the fallen. Augustine's emphasis on the remedial character of penance never varies; as Peter Brown has expressed it, "Corrective treatment fails in its purpose, if it exterminates its subject".²⁰⁰ As has been mentioned, he is solidly in the line of the tradition of the Church, both Eastern and Western, in this stance.

The overwhelming majority of the texts from his works cited in this thesis show that he thinks of the punishment in the light of the penitential practice of the Church of his day; the punishment brings about the restoration of the offender. In this

¹⁹⁹CSEL XLI, *op. cit.*, p. 481.

²⁰⁰Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

approach, he is following a tradition at least as old as Origen, who views the Corinthian text as being the *locus classicus* of the penitential system of his own day.²⁰¹ This brings us to mention a fact about Augustine's exegesis: it has a liturgical anchoring. Maurice Pontet has remarked:

On pourrait dire que l'exégèse de Saint Augustin est *liturgique*, plus que scientifique. Elle oppose, pour qui'ils se commentent l'un l'autre, deux pages ou deux points de la Bible, et cette mise en regard elle la reçoit d'une tradition fixée dans la liturgie.²⁰²

Although there is a similarity at this point to Origen, Augustine is far more cautious in his approach to a text than the Alexandrian presbyter. Origen's favourite tool of allegory, although used by Augustine, is employed less frequently by the latter, who also pays much more attention to the historical context of Scripture. As has been seen, Origen tends to view the entire Bible as a collection of choice gems, from which he may draw forth any at random, with little or no reference to the historical context. Augustine's first principle in exegesis is to interpret Scripture by Scripture²⁰³, which Origen also does, but the latter's approach often is void of any sense of history.

Augustine is well aware of the difference between the Old and New Testaments; at this point, he resembles the writers of the School of Antioch, although he is not as extreme in his interpretations of this difference between the Testaments as is Theodore of Mopsuestia²⁰⁴. The latter's sharp distinction between the two testaments could be bridged only by typological thinking. Augustine indulges frequently in a spiritualising exegesis which, while it avoids the excesses of Origen, would have been regarded by Theodore as not fully appreciating the difference between the Old and New Testaments.

²⁰¹This does not imply direct dependence on Origen by Augustine.

²⁰²Pontet, *L'Exégèse de S. Augustin Prédicateur*, p. 157.

²⁰³*Ibid.*, p. 166.

²⁰⁴cf. M.F. Wiles's article, "Theodore of Mopsuestia as Representative of the Antiochene School", *Cambridge History of the Bible I*, pp. 489-510.

Although Augustine usually avoids allegory, he is appreciative of spiritualising interpretations, which do not normally stretch the historical meaning too far; this has been particularly evident in *Contra epistulam Parmeniani*, in which he strongly inclines to interpret I Cor. 5:7 and 13 in such a way which internalises Paul's command; all Christians are to cleanse themselves of the old leaven of sin.

I have mentioned that Augustine's belief in the remedial power of penance never varies; what does vary is his emphasis, depending on context. This is particularly clear when we contrast his anti-Manichaean writings with his anti-Donatist ones. In the former, he leaves open the possibility of actual physical death for the offender; this is in defence of the Catholic stance on the unity of the Old and New Testaments. The Manichaeans rejected the stories of bloodshed and physical punishment in the Old Testament, preferring to cling to the spiritual gospel in the New Testament; Augustine proceeds to cut the ground from beneath them by showing them that Paul has imposed a punishment which certainly involves the body--perhaps even death. In his Anti-Donatist writings, Augustine opposes the harsh exclusion of offenders from Christian congregations, which was done with no possible remedy for those so expelled. Thus, although he is well aware that the Corinthian text may be read in such a way as to favour excommunication of an offender, he also insists that vv. 7 and 13 of that chapter may be read in a personalised, individual context, whereby Paul is commanding all Christians to cleanse themselves. Although in later years, he admits that the Greek original of 5:13 (in particular) will not allow that interpretation, he is still willing to cite it along with the correct interpretation. This variety of emphasis within a given text, as well as the exegetical honesty which is forced to admit that there is yet another interpretation, is a point of great interest. Even in the text which stresses Augustine's spiritual interpretation the most heavily (*Contra epistulam Parmeniani*), he still admits that the passage can equally well refer to the excommunication of a serious offender; where he takes issue with his Donatist

opponents is on the question of reconciliation; they refuse to admit that it exists, whereas Augustine is just as adamant that the point of penance is reconciliation.

The question may be asked whether Augustine's identification of the offender of I Corinthians 5 with the penitent man of II Corinthians 2 has coloured his understanding of the former text. Although it is difficult to decide this with certainty, Augustine seems to cite I Corinthians 5 more frequently in isolation than in tandem with II Corinthians 2. While he leaves no room for doubt that he does make that identification, he does not always build his argument for restoration on the basis of II Corinthians 2. It must also be remembered that, by this time, such an identification was part of the Church tradition, and as a faithful son of the Church defending its customs and traditions against Manichaeans and Donatists, he would be well aware what these traditions had said about the identity of the penitent man in II Corinthians 2.

Another point which should be noted is that in all the passages examined here, there is no reference to the bishop (however, the citation from *Epistle XCV* implies the office; cf. above, p. 56), even though we know Augustine's belief in the office and its powers. Anne-Marie La Bonnardière has noted Augustine's emphasis:

Mais quand il s'agit de son propre temps, Augustin précise sans ambiguïté que le pouvoir de lier et de délier appartient à l'évêque...Souvent, Augustin affirme que *regeneratio* et *reconciliatio* sont du domaine du pouvoir des clefs que détiennent les évêques.²⁰⁵

However, Augustine believes that the work done is God's. La Bonnardière describes his position thus:

...l'absolution est essentiellement œuvre divine; c'est dans l'intime du cœur de pécheur que se noue la rencontre entre la confession de l'homme et la charité de l'Esprit-Saint, rencontre purificatrice qu'a payée

²⁰⁵La Bonnardière, "Pénitence et réconciliation des Pénitents d'après saint Augustin" III, p. 198.

l'effusion du sang du Christ. Mais pardonné, le coupable reste "lié", responsable de son action ou de ses habitudes. Il a une peine à payer, une langueur à guérir. C'est aux ministres du Christ—aux évêques, descendants des Apôtres—que revient le ministère de la discipline ecclésiastique; c'est à eux de fixer la quantité, le mode, la durée des exedrcices pénitentiels qu'ils soient prébaptismaux, quotidiens, pénitentiels proprement dits; c'est à eux également que revient de présider aux cérémonies de "déliement"; régénération, Oraison dominicale, réconciliation. Ce rôle des évêques est d'autant plus éminent qu'il garantit une des conditions capitales de la remission des péchés; l'appartenance à l'unité de l'Église.²⁰⁶

Augustine does not use I Cor. 5:3-5 to prove that bishops are the heirs of the apostolic powers, although we know that he holds to it. As the Apostle Paul excommunicated an offender, so the bishops now have that power and should use it; it is their duty to enforce penance where necessary. R.C. Mortimer summarises:

It [*correptio*] is health-giving if God has predestined the sinner to eternal life. And again [in *De correptione et gratia*] in 16.49 he says that it is the bishops' duty to administer a severe *correptio*, but it is for God to make it effective.²⁰⁷

In keeping with this, the references should be noted where Augustine implies that it may not be possible to impose penance. Among the writers studied in the course of this thesis, he is the only one to admit it (in the context of I Corinthians 5). In *Epistles XXII* and *XXIX* he is deterred by the laxity of the society in which he was living. Augustine is seen as a man who knows his limits; desiring to impose penance, he still knows that he is living in a real world, in the midst of a church which is more infected by the world than it should be, and which might not accept their bishop's ideas on strict discipline in certain matters.²⁰⁸ We are thus given a painful glimpse into the life of the North African church near the turn of the fifth century.

²⁰⁶*Ibid.*, p. 203.

²⁰⁷Mortimer, *The Origins of Private Penance in the Western Church*, pp. 73-4.

²⁰⁸It should be noted that these are early letters.

Epistle XCV captures Augustine's quandary concerning harshness v. softness in the imposition of penance. While he is convinced of the necessity of penance, he is also aware that a heavy hand in the imposition of it may cause more harm than good. The knowledge that his Donatists opponents would be accusing him of laxity if he were too soft while some of his flock would be accusing him of severity must have been a galling experience for him.

Earlier I mentioned Augustine's adherence to the tradition of the Church. One of the points in this tradition concerns the undergoing of a great penance only once, a tradition going back to Hermas. This idea has frequently surfaced in the writers examined in this thesis (Origen, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Ambrose, Jerome). Van der Meer notes:

Every baptized person has the right to ask for a penance to be imposed. It was always understood, however, that this was the first and would be the last time it was performed...If after this reconciliation a man fell again into sin, the Church could not help him.²⁰⁹

However, lest this should sound too grim, he adds:

The man who fell a second time might indeed hope for forgiveness from God, but he could no longer obtain it from the Church, and here was possibly the reason why those who had incurred the ban often hesitated to ask for reconciliation, and why those who had grave sins on their conscience tended to postpone their request for a penance till they lay dying.²¹⁰

La Bonnardière has likewise noted the once-only nature of the *magna paenitentia*:

C'est dire le médecine tonique et vigoureuse, d'ailleurs appliquée une seule fois dans le cas de la pénitence majeure.²¹¹

²⁰⁹Van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop*, p. 385.

²¹⁰*Ibid.*

²¹¹La Bonnardière, *op. cit.*, III, p. 203.

Augustine, of course, did not treat all sins as worthy of the *magna paenitentia*. La Bonnardière, in her splendid tripartite essay on penance and reconciliation in the works of Augustine, has shown how Augustine distinguished various levels of guilt (and, consequently, various methods for obtaining cleansing, depending on the level of the sin in which a person was involved). She notes that Augustine is silent about how often the *magna paenitentia* was imposed in his day.²¹² This is certainly true in his treatment of the Corinthian passage, which deals with what Augustine would certainly have recognised as a grave sin; the severity of the punishment invoked by Paul demonstrates this.

Donatists might have demanded that Augustine give a definition of the purity of the Church, since his willingness to restore even serious offenders (after proper penance) is clear. W. Telfer has remarked:

Augustine in his *Enchiridion* (64), says that, in the Rule of Faith, we profess belief in the remission of sins. This shows, he says, that remission of sins takes place in the Church. So the life of the Church is guaranteed, not by its static purity, but by the continual forgiveness granted to her sinning members. He did much, also, to exalt the Second Repentance to sacramental status, by insisting that it could bring remission of post-baptismal sins only if performed within the Catholic Church.²¹³

Thus, against those who were genuinely lax in their lack of insistence that penance be done, Augustine strongly insists that there is a very important place for penance in the life of the Church; against the unforgiving rigorists, he insists that, properly executed, penance has the power to restore a person to life and communion. La Bonnardière notes that Augustine exhorts his people to submit *voluntarily* to penance, warning

²¹²*Ibid.*, II, p. 249.

²¹³Telfer, *The Forgiveness of Sins*, p. 90.

them that excommunication might otherwise follow; thus, he views excommunication as a punishment for the recalcitrant, not for the submissive.²¹⁴

It now remains to place Augustine in comparison with other writers examined in this thesis. Points of similarity to many of them, such as Origen, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Jerome, have already been noted. Augustine's identification of the penitent man of II Corinthians 2 with the offender of I Corinthians 5 puts him in the all but unanimous company of the patristic writers for the previous two hundred years²¹⁵. He does not show the legal interest of Ambrosiaster, nor does he speculate in his treatment of the Corinthian passage on how regeneration or punishment affect the human constitution (anthropology), as Severian of Gabala and Ambrosiaster do, and to a much lesser extent, Jerome. Neither does he reveal his thinking as to the full extent of the punishment imposed by Paul on the offender at Corinth. His occasional references to Ananias and Sapphira hint that he may have had some ideas along that line (Chrysostom, for example, is more outspoken about the possibility of physical difficulties accompanying the excommunication). Augustine is more at home speaking about the reality of excommunication. Unlike Chrysostom, he never utilises the text in the context of explaining human suffering; he is aware that its thrust is basically punitive. It has been noted above that Augustine's most pronounced variation is his spiritualising adaptation of I Cor. 5:7 and 13 to one's inner self, particularly in *Contra epistolam Parmeniani*. On the other hand, he never places the Corinthian passage in a monastic setting, using it as a guideline for monastic discipline, as Basil and Cassian do. As mentioned above, *Epistle CCXI* is addressed to refractory nuns, but there is nothing strictly monastic/conventual about Augustine's use of I Cor. 5:6 in that letter.

²¹⁴La Bonnardière, *op. cit.*, II, p. 260.

²¹⁵Tertullian being the only notable exception.

In general, Augustine's approach to the Corinthian text reflects both caution and creativity. His knowledge of tradition and his exegetical good sense keep him on a middle course between laxity and rigorism, as well as steering him clear of undue speculation. He writes as a passionate defender of the Church; however, within this we can see his powerful creative intellect at work in his application of scriptural texts to very real problems which the Church of his day was facing. His treatment of the Corinthian text reveals this characteristic combination of brilliance and sanity which continue to make Augustine a source of inspiration and a force to be reckoned with.

IV. JOHN CASSIAN

John Cassian (who died c. 435) is best remembered for bringing the monastic lore of the East to the West; he has also been noted for his semi-Pelagian reaction to one of the later works of Augustine (*De correptione et gratia*); he thought that Augustine had gone too far and was undercutting the motivation of monastic ardour by his emphasis on the absoluteness of divine predestination and the necessity of grace. It is not surprising to find that Cassian's references to I Corinthians 5 are placed against a monastic backdrop. He refers to I Corinthians 5 only twice; the passages occur in his two great monastic works, *De institutis coenobiorum* and the *Conlationes XXIV*. He does not cite II Corinthians 2 in connection with I Corinthians 5, and he has no comments on Col. 2:5 or I Tim. 1:20.

A. The first reference occurs in Book II, chapter 16 of *De institutis coenobiorum*. In chapter 15, Cassian has been describing the isolation and labour of the monks, saying that they, especially the young ones, are not allowed to be idle or to go anywhere together. He asserts that those who defy this disciplinary rule are pronounced to be guilty of no light fault; they are *contumaces* and *praeuaricatores*. He then adds:

quam culpam nisi in unum cunctis fratribus congregatis publica diluerint paenitentia, orationi fratrum nullus eorum interesse permittitur.²¹⁶

He continues in chapter 16, which immediately follows:

Sane si quis pro admissio quolibet delicto fuerit ab oratione suspensus, nullus cum eo prorsus orandi habet licentiam, antequam summissa in terram paenitentia reconciliatio eius et admissi uenia coram fratribus cunctis publice fuerit ab abbate concessa. ob hoc namque tali obseruantia semet ipsos ab orationis eius consortio segregant atque secernunt, quod credunt eum, qui ab oratione suspenditur, secundum apostolum **tradi Satanae**, et quisquis orationi eius, antequam recipiatur a seniore, inconsiderata pietate permotus communicare praesumpserit, complicem se damnationis eius efficiat, tradens scilicet semet ipsum uoluntarie Satanae, cui ille pro sui reatus emendatione fuerat deputatus: in eo uel maxime grauius crimen incurrens, quod cum illo se uel confabulationis uel orationis communione miscendo maiorem illi generet insolentiae fomitem et contumaciam delinquentis in peius enutriet. perniciosum namque solacium tribuens cor eius magis magisque faciet indurari nec humiliari eum sinet, ob quod fuerat segregatus, et per hoc uel increpationem senioris non magni pendere uel dissimulanter de satisfactione et uenia cogitare.²¹⁷

Cassian was the child of Eastern monasticism; as a young man he travelled to Bethlehem to learn the cenobitic life there, and after two years, he was given permission to travel to Egypt to observe monasticism there.²¹⁸ It was the fruit of these travels which he brought to the West, having an immense influence on subsequent figures such as St. Benedict and Cassiodorus.²¹⁹ The Eastern flavour of this passage is seen in its similarity to Basil's writings; the Cappadocian, in his monastic writings, cites the Corinthian passage in the context of the monk's attitude to his superior, not in

²¹⁶CSEL XVII, p. 30.

²¹⁷Ibid., pp. 30-1.

²¹⁸Hamman, *Patrology* IV, p. 512.

²¹⁹Ibid., p. 516.

relation to the monk's eternal destiny.²²⁰ Cassian does the same in the excerpt cited above. This is in contrast to the brief quotation from Horsiesi in my chapter on the later Egyptians (cf. *in loc.*), who implies that a monk's disobedience may affect him eternally.

In addition to this point, there are several others worth noting. First is the fact that Cassian not only bans a recalcitrant monk from communion, but also from community prayer; in fact, Cassian says nothing at all here about the Eucharist. The exclusion from prayer is perhaps taken from I Cor. 5:2, in which Paul expresses his horror that the offender has not been thrust out from the midst of the congregation. Second is the description of Satan as *cui ille pro sui reatus emendatione fuerat deputatus*; the representation of the devil as one who achieves the work of God in his chastisement of the sinner is reminiscent of the works of the Eastern writers from Origen²²¹ to the School of Antioch²²², as well as characterising the position of Latin authors such as Jerome and Augustine (cf. above). Cassian also agrees with all of these in his emphasis that the *traditio Satanae* is for *emendatione*. Even if he does not think that, in a monastic context, the punishment involves the man's eternal destiny, it is still for his improvement that it is imposed. Both Basil and Cassian are concerned to break the independent will of their monks. In Basil's immensely important monastic work *Regulae fusius tractatae*, Question 28 concerns what the attitude of all should be toward the disobedient. Basil's response to this question is that all should certainly be compassionate to a brother struggling to obey, but that if the brother is neither converted to obedience after much admonition nor curing himself (ἰώμενον ἑαυτόν) by his own works, the rest of the monks should cut the disobedient one off as a corrupt and useless member. He adds that a feigned kindness to the wicked is a

²²⁰cf. particularly the *Regulae brevius tractatae* and *Regulae fusius tractatae*.

²²¹*Contra Celsum* VII:70.

²²²John Chrysostom, *Homily XV* on I Corinthians; Theodoret, commentary on I Cor. 5 *in loc.*

betrayal of the truth and an act of treachery to the monastic community.²²³ It is this attitude which Cassian shares; the monk must be punished for his own good, with the goal being the breaking of his will so that he can once more take his place in the (obedient) monastic community. Cassian shows his debt to the tradition of the Church in his insistence that the penance be public; of course, this is also important to the idea of monastic community, and Cassian probably has that uppermost in his thinking, although the tradition of *exomologesis* would be known to him as well.

In his study of John Cassian, Owen Chadwick has included a passage concerning the abbot's ideas on penance. The section is particularly interesting when we realise that the punishment which Cassian believes to be a *traditio Satanae* is to be given for relatively trivial offences—certainly not like the glaring offence committed by the man in Corinth. Chadwick states:

But there was another type of confession which brought not advice but forgiveness. This confession could be either an admission to another or (if shame restrained the penitent) a private avowal to God in prayer...This direct confession to God brings his forgiveness without the mediation of priest or absolution: and it should not be applied to the grave sins (*capitalia crimina*) which are assumed to have ceased with the entry into "the good life", but only to the venial sins of thought and inadvertence inevitable in the life of the spiritual...²²⁴

The fact that Cassian does not envisage really serious crimes as occurring in the monastic community immediately places his use of the Corinthian text in a far different context from the one to which it originally referred.

B. Cassian's other reference to I Cor. 5:5 occurs in Book VII, chapter 28, of his *Conlationes XXIV*, the first conference of Abbot Serenus. This abbot, according to Cassian (who wrote this work many years after his sojourn in Egypt), told them the story of a monk who had been molested by an evil spirit after he had spoken a sharp

²²³*PG* XXXI, 987-8.

²²⁴Chadwick, *John Cassian: A Study in Primitive Monasticism*, p. 59.

word of disagreement to Abbot Macarius, whose prayer then set the man free (chapter 27). Abbot Serenus then continues (chapter 28):

Ex quo manifeste perpenditur non debere eos abominari
uel despici, quos uidemus diuersis temptationibus siue
istis nequitiae spiritibus tradi, quia duo haec credere
inmobiler nos oportet, primo quod sine dei permissu
nullus ab eis omnino temptetur, secundo quod omnia
quae a deo nobis inferuntur, siue tristia ad praesens seu
laeta uideantur, uelut a piissimo patre clementissimoque
medico pro nostris utilitatibus inrogentur, et idcirco eos
uelut paedagogis traditos humiliari, ut discedentes ex
hoc mundo uel purgatiores ad uitam aliam transferantur
uel poena leuiore plectantur, qui secundum apostolum
tradidi sunt in praesenti *Satanae in interitum carnis, ut
spiritus saluus fiat in die domini nostri Iesu Christi*.²²⁵

Whereas the first excerpt from Cassian's writings we have studied deals with discipline, this passage emphasises the educative aspect of humiliation; the context here concerns an insubordinate monk, and Serenus (via Cassian) is concerned to show the importance of having the independent will of a monk broken. Humiliations are thus educative (Cassian's use of *paedagogis* should be noted) and redemptive. Although Serenus's story concerns a specific instance, the principle he deduces from it speaks of discipline in a more general sense: humiliations are good for the soul and should be accepted as such. This idea has a surface resemblance to many of the writings of John Chrysostom²²⁶, who is always ready to emphasise the redemptive quality of this life's suffering to his hearers. However, none of Chrysostom's application of the Corinthian text occur in a monastic setting, and Cassian is talking about the voluntary accepting of humiliations, which is part of a monk's education.

In comparison with the other writers examined in this thesis, Cassian agrees most closely with Basil in his exegesis of the Corinthian text, as well as in his general monastic outlook on life. He follows tradition in believing that the *traditio Satanae* is

²²⁵CSEL XIII, p. 207.

²²⁶cf. *De Lazaro*, in particular.

remedial, and his transplanting of it to the setting of the monastery is firmly in agreement with his great Cappadocian predecessor. His exegesis of I Corinthians 5 is conditioned by his acceptance of the monastic life as the proper arena for the spiritual Christian. By implication, he thinks that the abbots have inherited the apostolic power of binding and loosing, at least within their own communities. What is interesting (and disturbing) about his references to I Corinthians 5 is a lack of any sense of the Corinthian situation at all. For him, the chapter has become only something from which to pluck a text to support his ideas on monasticism, the perfect Christian life. Consequently, his references to the text itself are comparatively colourless.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Augustine dominates this chapter; in his works we see his struggle for honest exegesis, even when the results do not conform to what he prefers. He also makes a fascinating study of the way in which a current crisis can affect the exegesis of a passage, in spite of the struggle for objectivity. The brilliance of his thinking in a variety of contexts illustrates why he continues to grasp the human imagination. His commitment to the Catholic tradition brings with it the acceptance of the identification of the offender of I Corinthians 5 with the penitent man in II Corinthians 2.

The other figure of strong interest in this chapter is Pelagius; as mentioned above, his comments on the Corinthian text give little indication of the struggle in which he was due to be enmeshed with Augustine. We see the influence of Ambrosiaster not only in his conclusions on I Corinthians 5, but perhaps also in his close adherence to the text and refusal to speculate.

Jerome, the giant of textual studies, emerges piecemeal in his treatment of the Corinthian text. His remarks must be gleaned from his various works, and, while his views on the basic outlines are clear enough, the lack of a lengthier, more focussed study causes his study to be comparatively characterless in comparison with that of Augustine and Pelagius.

Cassian has the least to say on the Corinthian text. He is most interesting because of his transplanting of Paul's words to a monastic setting. His references to the Corinthian text are merely allusory; we are given no further details into his reading of I Corinthians 5, and it is possible that he represents the coming age of the Church, in which the exposition of Scripture took second place to the development of a theology which was willing to use Scripture for proof texts, but one which had little use for detailed commentary.

SUMMARY

We have now completed our investigation into the exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 between the years 200 and 451. I will present the summary of my research under the headings in the title of this thesis: spirit, penance, and perfection, since they capture the facets of the discussions concerning the exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5.

1. Spirit

Tertullian, in addressing the question of what spirit was to be saved¹, is convinced that it cannot be the spirit of the offender; his rigorous Montanism precludes this. Therefore, it must be the spirit of the *Church* which is to be saved². His idea has not been seconded by any of the other writers observed in this thesis, although there are similarities in the approach of the School of Antioch (particularly Severian of Gabala) and in the writings of Ambrosiaster and Pelagius. With Severian, only the regenerate man is πνευματικός, and when a believer has fallen into grievous sin and is expelled from the Church, both the Holy Spirit and the sinner's own spirit (which was given only in regeneration) remain within the Church.³ Ambrosiaster takes a similar approach, understanding the *spiritus* as the Holy Spirit, although he affirms that it is the soul which determines whether a person is carnal or spiritual; the soul of a person who has fallen into sin will begin to become fleshly, losing its spiritual character.⁴ This particular point is also emphasised by Epiphanius of Salamis⁵. Pelagius, in one of his alternate interpretations for I Cor. 5:5, follows Ambrosiaster in suggesting that "the spirit" (or "the Spirit") may be retained in the Church.⁶ These related patterns of thought, from Tertullian to Pelagius, are the most

¹Earlier in the Corinthian passage, Paul refers to his own spirit; this is never debated by the writers we have been studying. The question revolves around the use of πνεῦμα/*spiritus* in v. 5.

²*De pudicitia* 13.

³Cf. above the surviving fragments of his commentary on I Corinthians.

⁴Cf. his commentary on I Corinthians 5.

⁵*Panarion* 66, 86.

⁶Cf. his commentary on I Corinthians 5.

outstanding in the exegesis of πνεῦμα/*spiritus* by the writers examined in this thesis. The other writers, from Origen onwards, unanimously agree that the spirit which is to be saved is the offender's own spirit.

2. Penance

All of the authors observed here are well aware that I Cor. 5:3-5 is concerned with discipline. By the time the third-century Fathers wrote, a penitential system was beginning to develop, and it was natural for the exegesis of the Corinthian text to be read against this background. Origen is perhaps the best example of a writer interpreting the disciplinary passages of the Bible against the backdrop of the procedure of the Church of his day. He often refers to the Corinthian episode in this way, particularly, as Rahner has noted, since he views I Cor. 5:3-5 as the classic illustration of penance in the Church.⁷ Origen is also our earliest extant writer⁸ to maintain that the offender of I Cor. 5 is the same as the penitent man of II Cor. 2;⁹ consequently, the forgiveness and restoration of heinous offenders follows as a matter of course. It has been seen that the vast majority of the writers viewed in this study hold to this position, with Tertullian being the major exception.

As to the punishment, Origen states that the σάρξ which must be destroyed is the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός;¹⁰ likewise, Epiphanius¹¹ and Ambrosiaster¹² indicate that it is the fleshly character of the sinful soul that must be put to death, so that it may resume its spiritual nature. Ambrose, resembling Origen, thinks that Paul is referring to the lusts of the flesh rather than to the physical flesh itself.¹³ Tertullian hints that

⁷Rahner, "La doctrine d'Origène sur la Pénitence", *RSR* 37 (1950), p. 77.

⁸We know from Tertullian's objections in *De pudicitia* that this theory was already in circulation.

⁹e.g., in *Homily I* on Ps. XXXVII (LXX).

¹⁰*Catena* on I Corinthians 5.

¹¹Epiphanius, *loc. cit.*

¹²Ambrosiaster, *loc. cit.*

¹³*De paenitentia* I, 17.

the *interitum carnis* means the actual death of the offender¹⁴, but he is a solitary voice¹⁵. He always interprets "flesh" in its most literal and physical sense, i.e., as referring to the body. Origen¹⁶ and Augustine¹⁷ affirm that the sentence of capital punishment in the Old Testament has been replaced by ecclesiastical penance in the New Testament times (in which the Church is living), and Origen¹⁸ maintains that the "destruction of the flesh" thus refers to the bodily afflictions undergone by penitents. All writers (Tertullian included) are insistent that excommunication is at least part of the penalty¹⁹.

The end of the fourth century sees a development in the thinking concerning the punishment inflicted by Paul. Earlier authors (e.g. Origen and Basil) describe the punishment as *exomologesis* following excommunication; they go no farther. However, John Chrysostom²⁰, Pacian²¹, and Jerome²² imply that there may be some severe bodily difficulty or infirmity added to the excommunication. Thus, the "destruction of the flesh" refers to personal afflictions as part of the punishment.

Satan's place in the punishment (I Cor. 5:5) is addressed particularly in the latter part of the period under discussion, with John Chrysostom giving the most detailed writing to it. He sees Satan operating as the δῆμιος²³, the public hangman, who may be vile in his own person (Chrysostom in particular emphasises the "may"--i.e., a hangman is not of necessity vile) but who executes the judgments of the

¹⁴*De pudicitia* 14.

¹⁵Although Augustine leaves this possibility open in his arguments against the Manichaeans in *Contra Adimantium* 17.

¹⁶*Homily XIV*, 4 on Leviticus.

¹⁷*De fide et operibus* II, 3.

¹⁸Origen, *loc. cit.*

¹⁹Although many of the fathers (Augustine and Chrysostom in particular) are aware of the dangers of its overuse.

²⁰*Homily XV* on I Corinthians.

²¹*Epistle III* to Simpronianus.

²²*Commentary on Galatians* (treating 5:9 of that book).

²³e.g., *De diabolo tentatore* II, 4.

righteous magistrates. Theodoret²⁴ and Jerome²⁵ acquiesce in this view. Although its use is more frequent in this latter part of our timespan, it was a concept first used by Origen²⁶.

Medical categories characterise the writings of the Eastern writers in their understanding of I Corinthians 5 (and of penance). Origen compares sin to ψώρα (mange)²⁷, as does Chrysostom²⁸, noting that the shepherd must preserve the rest of the flock from the scourge (in reference to the necessity for excommunication) as well as treating the one infected with the disease. Basil states that reproof for sin is ὡς φάρμακον²⁹; the disputed Basilian commentary on Isaiah refers to physicians who use the bites of vipers to heal those who are weak or ill;³⁰ Gregory of Nyssa also utilises medical terminology³¹. Among the Latin writers, Ambrose, strongly influenced by Eastern writers (especially Origen), makes use of medical/medicinal concepts in his understanding of sin and penitence³², as does Augustine³³.

Beginning with Origen, the vast majority of the writers examined in this thesis believe that the purpose of the punishment is restorative; the offender is to be brought back into the fellowship of the Church. The identification of the penitent man in II Cor. 2:5-11 with the offender of I Cor. 5:3-5 contributed much to this belief; by the end of our period, it is such an accepted item of Christian tradition that only schismatics such as the Novatianists seem to be rejecting it. If the spirit which is to be

²⁴Cf. his comments on I Tim. 1:20 in his commentary on the Pauline epistles.

²⁵Cf. his treatment of Isa. 14:4b-6 in his commentary on Isaiah; Jerome's Latin term for δῆμιος is *exactor*.

²⁶cf. *Contra Celsum* VII:70.

²⁷*Catenae* on I Corinthians

²⁸*Epistula II ad Olympiam*.

²⁹*Moralia*, chapter 6, rule 72.

³⁰In treating Isa. 13:5 (LXX).

³¹*Oratio III* on the Beatitudes.

³²*De paenitentia* I, 13.

³³*Contra epistulam Parmeniani* III, 2, 14.

saved is the spirit of the offender, the stance of Origen and the rest of those who accept this identification is natural; however, it is adopted even by those who do not agree with this understanding of πνεῦμα/*spiritus*, i.e., Severian and Ambrosiaster. The destruction of the flesh, according to this large majority, is a punishment imposed on serious sinners, intended to bring them back to the fellowship of the Church. The ὀλεθρον τῆς σαρκὸς/ *interitum carnis* is not final, but a severe measure meant to bring sinners to their senses.

Paul speaks of imposing the sentence, being present "in spirit" with the Corinthians when they deliver the punishment. As we have seen, the story of Elisha being in spirit with Gehazi when the latter accepted a reward from Naaman the Syrian (II Kings 5:19-27) has become normative for understanding this; Origen utilises it³⁴, as does Chrysostom³⁵ and, among Latin writers, Ambrosiaster³⁶ and Pelagius³⁷.

As to the imposition of the sentence, the part of the congregation is often completely ignored, although Paul's command to the Corinthians was, when they were gathered together, with Paul's spirit and the power of the Lord with them, παραδοῦναι τοιοῦτον τῷ Σατανᾷ; most of the texts studied here assume that the sentence was passed by Paul from afar, his spirit being present in the assembled congregation. Origen, however, in his surviving *Catena* on I Corinthians, states that the Corinthian church stands guilty by allowing the sinner to remain unreprieved in their midst; the congregation has a part in the expulsion of the offender.³⁸ Likewise, Chrysostom notes in one work that the congregation has been given a share in the proceedings³⁹, but in many others, his praise of the Apostle gives the impression that

³⁴*Catena* on I Corinthians.

³⁵*Homily XV* on I Corinthians.

³⁶Cf. his commentary on Col. 2:5, which uses similar wording to I Cor. 5:3.

³⁷Cf. his comments on I Cor. 5:3 in his *Expositiones* on the Pauline epistles.

³⁸*Catena XXIII*.

³⁹*Homily XV* on I Corinthians.

the sentence was really imposed by Paul alone⁴⁰. Ambrose devotes considerable space to the congregation's role in penance in *De paenitentia*, noting that the assistance of faithful Christians in restoring the penitent will also help the former in their Christian lives, as well as bringing back the fallen.⁴¹ This comes closer to the actual wording of the Corinthian text, which implies that the congregation has the power to pass the sentence already fixed by Paul.

A question which one might think would be addressed more fully in the exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 is whether the leaders of the churches have inherited the power which Paul exercised. However, this is an item rarely touched on; it is everywhere assumed that the bishops have inherited the apostolic power, at least in part, and we know from other writings⁴² that at least some of these writers believed the bishops to hold the place of the Apostles. The nearest thing to a theological justification for this belief in the exegesis of I Cor. 5:3-5 comes from Cyril of Alexandria.⁴³ In spite of this, we see that the bishops are understood to be invested with the power to excommunicate and restore offenders; even Tertullian in his Montanist rejection of the Catholic stance admits that the bishop (*in praesidentis officio*) holds this endowment.⁴⁴ One thing which should be noted, however, is the belief that bishops may exercise their power by letter, even as Paul was able to make his epistles the bearer of his own apostolic power. This surfaces in the reference to I Cor. 5:3-4 in the *Acta* of the Seventh Council of Carthage⁴⁵, and it is also taken up by

⁴⁰cf. *Adversus Judaeos VIII*, and *Homily V* on I Timothy.

⁴¹*De paenitentia I*, 15, 78-80.

⁴²e.g., *Epistle XLI*, 3 of Jerome.

⁴³cf. his treatment of Jn. 20:22-3 in Book XII of his commentary on John.

⁴⁴*De pudicitia* 14.

⁴⁵Cf. Appendix A (following Chapter 1).

Dionysius of Alexandria⁴⁶. Among the Latins, Ambrose gives perhaps the most pronounced statement of this belief.⁴⁷

As to the Day of the Lord to which Paul refers in I Cor. 5:5, it is always assumed to be Judgment Day; however, the writers see no reason to delay the fate of the sinner until then. Their view (with the exception of Tertullian) is that when the offender is restored, then his spirit will be saved until the Day of the Lord. Tertullian would say that the expulsion of the offender would last until the Day of the Lord. Likewise, Severian, Ambrosiaster, and Pelagius, who believe that the Holy Spirit will be retained in the Church while the offender is undergoing penance, would say that, even if offenders did not return, the Holy Spirit would still remain intact within the Church until the Day of the Lord. Thus, the writers of this period believe that what is done now by the Church in regard to offenders will anticipate Judgment Day.

3. Perfection

The idea of perfection was part of the mindset of emerging monasticism and asceticism; the true Christianity was understood to be ascetic. Perfection included the breaking of the self-assertive human will, and we see that this was one of the chief aims of Basil's *Regulae Fusius Tractatae* and *Regulae Brevius Tractatae*; I Cor. 5:3-5 is employed as a tool for effecting this. The flesh which must be destroyed is the old human nature, insistent on getting its own way. The way of penance is to bring the monk into conformity with the rest of the community, as led by the prior. It has been seen that this approach to the Corinthian text, while important, occupies less space than the question of repentance for non-monastic Christians who have at least temporarily lost their battle with the world. Penance is regarded by Gregory of Nazianzus as restoring the purity of the grace of baptism, which has been lost by sin⁴⁸,

⁴⁶Cf. Chapter 4.

⁴⁷*Epistle XXXVII (XLVII, Maurist numbering)*, chapter 6.

⁴⁸*Oratio XXXIX*; cf. Althaus, *Die Heilslehre des heiligen Gregor von Nazianz*, pp. 193-4.

but the use of I Corinthians 5:3-5 in the context of perfection does not seem to have been applied to Christians outside the monastic communities.⁴⁹

Several overall remarks need to be made. First, it is obvious that the Church considered this passage extremely important in the development of its penitential theology. The close association of Paul's words in I Cor. 5 with the accepted procedure for discipline quickly made it almost impossible to think of the Corinthian passage without thinking of penance within the Church. The one major exception to this is the anonymous *De recta in Deum fide*, but the citations of the Corinthian passage in it are directed against Marcionite dualism; the author is concerned to show that the God of the New Testament is the same as the God of the Old Testament, and that he still inflicts punishment. Second, the development in thought at the end of the fourth century concerning the nature of the punishment implies that the writers were becoming aware that the sharpness of Paul's words indicates something in addition to excommunication. The earlier writers determined that Paul had excommunication in mind; the later writers agreed, but said that there was more than that involved. The question may be asked whether the changing social position of the Church might have something to do with this. If so, it is not obvious, since Augustine, writing long after Theodosius's proclamation of Christianity as the state religion, states his belief that penance in the New Testament has taken the place of capital punishment in the Old—but the same view was held by Origen, who lived in a time when the Church was still subject to persecution. The same thing could be said about the use of δῆμιος and its Latin equivalent (as used by Jerome), *quaestionarius*; while these terms were being used at the end of the fourth century, δῆμιος had already been used by Origen nearly two hundred years previously. Third, the ancient tradition that the penitent man of II Cor. 2 was none other than the offender of I Cor. 5, mentioned as already existing

⁴⁹Pelagius, of course, held to the possibility of perfection, but he does not exegete I Corinthians 5 as a support for his views.

in the time of Tertullian⁵⁰, was never jettisoned by the Church. Tertullian in his Montanist phase might reject such an identification, but the Catholics from Origen onward held to it. Origen's confident assertion of this identity (the earliest extant writings we have which do this), building on an idea already present and developing the idea of penance as remedial and restorative medicine, had a powerful effect on the views of penance which developed in the centuries following his death. The dependence on Origen is not always direct⁵¹, particularly when Origenism began to be suspect) but the influence of his thinking left an indelible mark on developing penitential theology. Likewise, the growing emphasis on the tradition of the Church probably made later writers comfortable about accepting the identification⁵². In the course of thesis, two instances have been seen of a very pronounced tendency to let one's theology (or the existing theological question) colour one's exegesis, both from North Africa: Tertullian, whose insistence that serious sin could not possibly be forgiven by the Church is almost certainly a determining factor in his rejection of the identification of the figures in I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2⁵³, and Augustine, whose horror at the Donatist schism makes him willing to entertain a spiritual, individualistic interpretation of I Cor. 5:13 (*Auferte malum ex uobis ipsis*), even though he is aware that the original context speaks of expulsion of an offender from the congregation.

The writers have little to say about the nature of the relationship of the Corinthian offender and the woman; Greek writers often refer to her as μητροῦα and the Latins as *noverca*, which perhaps signifies that they understand the woman to have been truly married to the offender's father. At other times, they merely use the Pauline wording concerning the man who had τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ.

⁵⁰*De pudicitia* 13.

⁵¹although many of the Greek writers use much of the same vocabulary in their descriptions of penance; cf. in particular chapters 3 (Basil and Gregory of Nyssa) and 5 (Chrysostom and Theodoret).

⁵²especially since the one voice raised against it was that of the schismatic Tertullian.

⁵³This is not to say that they are the same figure; but Tertullian's theology at this time would preclude any possibility of even thinking about it.

Cyril and Jerome, in their commentaries on Amos, note the similarity of the situation the prophet addresses in 2:6ff., in which father and son both have sexual intercourse with the same woman. The most development is seen in Theodoret, who maintains that Paul's words signify a loving relationship such as that between mother and son; the word "stepmother", which Paul does not use, may signify hatred in a relationship, according to Theodoret, and this is why Paul uses the Greek phrase above. Rather than discuss the nature of the relationship, the writers take the unnatural relationship as an example of a particularly serious sin, moving immediately to the question of punishment and the possibility of restoration.

Chrysostom notes that some have said that the offender was a teacher and/or leader within the Corinthian congregation (cf. *Epistula II ad Olympiam*), and at places seems to follow this thinking, although it does not seem to affect his conclusions; he thinks of penance as being necessary for all serious offenders, not just clerical ones. Severian of Gabala notes that the offender was nobly born (εὐγενῆς), but, like Chrysostom, does not imply that this makes any difference in the penance to be borne. This teaching as to the status of the offender within the community seems to have been confined to the School of Antioch.

CONCLUSIONS

The writers we have examined have ranged from North Africa (Tertullian and Augustine) to Palestine (Eusebius of Caesarea and Jerome in his later years). The exegetical approaches to the text vary as much as the geography; Tertullian is very literal in his understanding of the *interitum carnis*, which to him means the possible death of such an offender, whereas Origen is convinced that it is a figurative term which refers to the destruction of the *mind* of the flesh, not the physical body itself, although the latter suffers from the penitential procedure. Some writers (e.g., John Chrysostom and Origen) have preached on the passage at length, while others (e.g., Jerome) refer to it only *en passant* while directing their attention to other concerns

(Jerome obviously understands the passage to fit within a penitential context, but he does not use it as extensively to prove his points in this connection as others, such as Origen and Chrysostom). Some of the writers (e.g., Tertullian in his Montanist phase and Augustine arguing against the Donatist position) are particularly concerned to cite it in support of their position in relation to the controversies of the day; at times such as these, their convictions almost overwhelm their objectivity⁵⁴.

The real foci of debate on vv. 3-5 during the period under discussion are 1) the nature of the punishment—excommunication alone or something in addition to it?; 2) the aim of the punishment—restoration or irrevocable expulsion?; and 3) the identity of the *πνεῦμα/spiritus* which is to be saved—the offender's spirit, or the Holy Spirit, or the spirit of the Church? As we have seen, from Origen onward, the passage has been interpreted as signifying the temporary expulsion of the offender from the Church, with restoration following penance as the goal; the spirit is the offender's spirit. In the later years of our period, we find that writers such as Chrysostom and Jerome think that the punishment may involve some bodily affliction in addition to the expulsion from the Church, but they also agree that the spirit which is to be saved is the spirit of the offender. It is in the Antiochene writers and Ambrosiaster that we see a different understanding of *πνεῦμα/spiritus* developing; it may refer to the man's own spirit, which is kept with the Holy Spirit within the Church when the offender is expelled (Severian), or it may simply refer to the Holy Spirit, of whom the offender is deprived when he is excommunicated. As to the possibility of restoration, however, these writers are agreed that the older tradition of the Church is correct. It has been a point of interest to note that, in spite of the different exegetical approaches employed in the treatment of this text, there is broad agreement on its character as remedial and restorative (Tertullian, of course, being the major exception).

⁵⁴In Tertullian's case, "almost" may not be accurate; his rigorism inclines him to the conclusions which he adopts. Augustine, as we have seen, is more careful, even though he would prefer that the spiritualising approach to I Cor. 5:13 be adopted.

The historical value of patristic exegesis can be seen when we examine the works of modern commentators on I Corinthians. It is a point of considerable interest to see that some of the opinions we have noted in our writers are surfacing afresh. Chrysostom's notice that "some people" think that the offender may have committed his offence "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (thus reading the structure of the sentence as, "I have pronounced judgment on the one who has done such a thing in the the name of the Lord Jesus"), has been appearing in recent times⁵⁵. Likewise, Ambrosiaster's idea that the spirit which is saved is the Holy Spirit, which is retained or reserved within the Church while the offender is expelled, is present in the thinking of Günther Bornkamm; Hans von Campenhausen remarks in a footnote⁵⁶ that, "Günther Bornkamm has convinced me in conversation that here as in the rest of Paul πνεῦμα must be distinguished from the human ego which it indwells. What is meant is that the divine power which has been bestowed on the congregation and on the apostle (5:4), and in which the sinner also had his share, ought no longer to be left in his possession, but must be 'rescued' by his death, in order that it may form part of the perfection and wholeness of the Body of Christ at the Last Day." Although Ambrosiaster did not envision the death of the offender, Tertullian did, and Bornkamm's thinking on I Corinthians 5 as cited above is reminiscent of the fiery North African Montanist writer's stance. Tertullian's idea that possible death may be the punishment Paul has in mind is an idea also adopted by Goguel⁵⁷, Käsemann⁵⁸, and Barrett⁵⁹. However, Fee notes that nowhere else does Paul refer to death as an ὀλεθρον τῆς σαρκὸς and that, consequently, it is not certain that this is what he means in I Cor. 5:5. Although Fee does not think that the penitent man in II Cor. 2:5-

⁵⁵e.g., in Frederick Danker's presentation at the St. Louis SBL, 1976; also in Jerome Murphy-O'Connor in "I Corinthians V, 3-5", *Revue Biblique* 84 (1977), pp. 239-45.

⁵⁶EAASP, p. 135.

⁵⁷*The Primitive Church*, p. 234.

⁵⁸"Sentences", p. 71 (*New Testament Questions of Today*); cited by Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 210.

⁵⁹*The First Epistle to the Coirinthians*, p. 126.

11 is the same as the offender in I Cor. 5:1-13, he does think that Paul's counsel for restoration of an offender (II Cor. 2:5-11) is generally indicative of the Apostle's procedure with fallen Christians; thus, Fee interprets this passage in the light of the Pauline contrast between σάρξ and πνεῦμα.⁶⁰ It should be noted that he thinks that the spirit which is to be saved is the offender's spirit; thus, although he avoids identifying the offenders of I Cor. 5 and II Cor. 2, otherwise his exegesis agrees with that espoused by Origen in the third century. The fact that ancient interpretations are resurfacing highlights one of the values of patristic exegesis.

Another value of studying the use of Scripture by the Fathers is that we are called back to our roots. These men stood much closer to the Christ event than we do, and their interpretation of it and its consequences for the Church of their day cannot be ignored. Our century at times gives the impression of overwhelming assurance that our generation is the only one worthy of notice, and that all solutions of the past are not as good as the solutions which we concoct. An examination of the mental disciplines of the ancient writers can be an excellent corrective.

Our age, too, is one which scorns discipline, and the exegesis of a passage such as I Cor. 5:3-5 sounds very foreign to us; however, it reveals the thinking of those who took their responsibilities seriously and wanted to find the proper medium between laxity and undue rigour. The human race sways from one extreme to the other, and the toleration we experience today may swing toward severity tomorrow. If that should happen, we should learn from the struggles of the past, rather than thinking that we have to begin afresh in striking the proper balance. Apart from that, it is healthy for us, in a day when church membership is taken lightly by many, to examine a time when it was viewed as something serious and immensely valuable.

The obscurity of Paul's vivid language in I Cor. 5:3-5 elicited powerful thinking from some of the greatest theological minds in the Church; these men took their responsibility seriously. Our study should lead us to an appreciation of the

⁶⁰Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, pp. 211-12.

immense problems facing the young Church, both in its relative infancy (200) and after Theodosius's proclamation of Christianity as the religion of the Empire. Even when we do not agree with some of the conclusions of the writers, we should be impressed with the seriousness with which they tackled the difficult passages of Scripture in order to bring the Church to maturity, and with the solid results which became the foundation not only for the medieval Church, but even for our own day.

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